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SOME THINGS

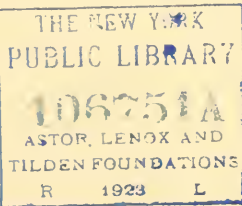
# UNDER THE SUN

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BY REV. R. E. SMITH.

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PRESS OF THE  
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## PREFACE.

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The extreme maiden effort of the author's first effort in offering a publication to the public, makes it appropriate to offer a word of apology, or rather an explanation. My reasons are summed up mainly in two: First, that I might really be of some practical benefit to my many friends and fellowman who may chance to read my book; and secondly, that the sale of the same may assist me in prosecuting my college course, and thereby better enable me to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ's gospel. I have given a history of my struggles in life, hoping thereby to encourage any struggling or despairing young man into whose hands it may fall, and to point out to all others the principles so necessary to a well rounded, symmetrical, happy and useful life. With the fancies and temptations of my own youthful days still fresh in my memory, and the present inspirations and aspirations of young manhood burning in my heart, has created an inordinate love for these two classes, and should I feel that no one of these two would be benefited by reading these chapters, then I assure you they would never appear before the public.

My education is now the great question of my life. I have prayed earnestly for a way to be opened that I might return to college and complete my studies, and I believe that my impressions to write this book is the answer to my prayers. Certainly it would fill my heart with joy to know that the source that was supplying my needs in school was bestowing blessings on others at the same time.

There has been no effort whatever to avoid the critic, as I have not written with literary applause in view. I have simply

told my story as prompted by my heart. Indeed, I could criticise the work in several places myself, so far as phraseology is concerned. But I leave this feature of book-writing to the thousands whom it would be foolish and egotistical for me to attempt to equal.

And now, I lay the pen down and lift up my heart in prayer to the Father of all blessings for His benedictions upon every friend who reads these lines.

Lovingly,

THE AUTHOR,

## SKETCH OF MY LIFE.

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I am the eighth child of J. T. and Lucinda Smith. The war made a gap of five years between my age and my twin sisters, who were the last before me. I suppose I would have been—following up the previous rating—three years older than I am had it not been for the war. In that event my history might have been very different. I don't know where I would be at present. Had I married three years before I did, I am sure I would have married some other lady, for my wife would not have been old enough to marry. So when I think about having some one else for my wife and having to guess at all the rest of my life, I am really glad that I was not born the three years sooner.

At the age of two years and eleven months there was a gloom settled down upon our home that the changing, shifting scenes of life have never been able to expel. During the stormy month of January an angel stole into our happy little home and bore away forever the idol of our hearts—our dear, precious mother.

There are many sad things in life to which we are all subject, but none, perhaps, are attended with so much sorrow and bitterness as that of the death of mother. It is a loss that can never be overcome. Time can never

make that family what they were before. It matters not who comes nor who goes, there is ever and anon a "vacant chair." Home's luminary is out. She has put on a cloak of mourning that she will wear until the home itself is finally broken up and scattered. Home's golden chain is snapped and no human ingenuity can weld it back again. Such a loss to a boy is nearly ruinous. Many have been the times that I have watched the devotion of a mother toward her boy and then gone away and wept bitterly because I had no mother. I have often noticed boys who did not seem to fully appreciate and reciprocate mother's love, and I would think how fondly I would love and how studiously I would seek the happiness of my sainted mother were it given unto me to do so. In my boyhood days I used to often picture home with mother back again with us, and I would sometimes work myself up to believe that God would send her back to us. Of course maturer years have changed many of my thoughts and desires, and now, had I the privilege, I would not have her come back. No, no! Doubtless she suffered enough while here. But now that boyhood's speculative dreams have ceased, it is one of the raptures that swells my breast, that mother is still mother, and soon we shall meet again, meet to part no more; meet where separation never takes place and where eternity will afford me the opportunity to brighten and polish that love that was born on earth but ripened in heaven.

When mother died, father was a moderately well-to-do

farmer of Southwest Georgia, but my older brothers persuaded him to sell out the old home and move to a near village and go into the mercantile business. This he did, and in about five years he had credited out his business and was left without a dollar. In the meantime he had married again and had a young family coming on. We then, feeling that there was but little encouragement in that old worn-out district to try to rebuild, induced him, somewhat against his will, to come to Texas. An older brother furnished the money, and we arrived in the vicinity of Crawford, McLennan county, January 31, 1876, without enough money to buy a wild Spanish pony. I was then in my tenth year, and the oldest boy at home. Father's health gave way and I was largely depended upon from that time on to keep the meat and bread question in running order. With three older sisters, father, stepmother and several younger brothers and sisters to support, and no one able to be of much help save one brother two years younger than I; so hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder, brother John and I fought the "wolf from the door" until I was twenty-four years old. This, of course, deprived me of all advantages of an education, except what spare time I had at home, when my oldest sister would help me with my reading, writing, arithmetic and spelling. Every year when school opened in our community it was a fresh source of humiliation to me, for half the boys in the community, some of the girls, and a part of

the old people would ask me if I was not going to attend school. I had a good deal of pride, notwithstanding our poverty, and these interrogations annoyed me very much. However, I never despaired, but always insisted that I would have an education if it took me until I was forty years old.

From the age of nine to twenty I passed through a great many trying ordeals, but I will mention only one, and I mention this to show you what we can really endure and to encourage any struggling heart-sick boy who may be fighting life's battles, and imagines that his lot in life is the saddest of any one's, and that the barriers to success are insuperable. On the 15th day of December, 1878, by a rather odd accident, I had my lower limb badly broken. It was Sunday evening. Brother John and I had gone to the lot to feed the horses. We had a very large Newfoundland dog, and he had gone out in the field and jumped up a brush rabbit. The rabbit ran between my legs, and the dog, attempting to go around me, struck me centerly on my left limb. The heel of my shoe was in a horse-track and would not give, hence the result. We were then living on David McFadden's place, working on the halves. My being crippled so reduced our field force that we could not well cultivate any land that year. This necessitated our moving. Father rented a house about three miles distant and put me in a wagon and moved me to the new home. We had not more than got straightened up



when a gentleman came and told us the house we were living in was justly his, and before he would be swindled out of it (I think the matter was then in court) that he would set fire to it, and, as he did not wish to harm us, he advised us to get out at once. Fortunately for us, there was another vacant house near by, which we rented; but unfortunately, we had neither horse nor wagon with which to move. So this was done the next best way. As I was not yet able to be on crutches, you may wonder how I made this transit. Let it suffice to say, "I got there." However, the move was very unfavorable to the inflamed condition of my wound, and delayed my progress in regaining my footing again.

Just a few weeks after this last move, the first and only suspicion that was ever cast on the fair name of my now sainted father, took place. The crime was perpetrated by one———, now a large furniture merchant of Waco, Texas, but then a little commission merchant doing business in our neighborhood. The crime was prompted purely and solely for revenge, and in no sense to recover lost goods, as he claimed. He had been paying some respects to one of my sisters, who had, for good reasons, declined to receive any further attention from him. This angered his shriveled spirit, and he sought to relieve himself by pretending that his store had been opened and goods stolen. To recover(?) which he had a search warrant issued and our house searched for the missing(?) goods. Father was away

from home hoeing corn for a neighbor while the search was being made, but was informed by a friend what had taken place. In view of his age, his honor, and his bad circumstances, this infamous thrust at his unstained character so deeply pierced his high sense of honor that he came home and prostrated himself upon his bed and gave vent to his crushed and bleeding heart. His entire system underwent such a shock that he was thrown into a spell of fever which liked to have ended in death. I am glad to say, however, that this intended thrust did not cast even a reflection upon his character. The best citizens of the community assured him that no one believed that there was a semblance of truth in the whole matter, while several of the best young men of the vicinity offered to repay the gentleman with a good flogging if father would only express his willingness, which he would not; for he always preferred to suffer rather than to harm others. The long protracted spell of sickness that followed this, left only my younger brother to earn whatever he could.

This brings me to my crutches, and with them I did not perform wonders, but I did "endure hardness as a good soldier." I have a number of living witnesses to the fact that every Sunday evening for several weeks I walked four miles to a friend's farm and went to the field each day during the week on my crutches, and then by the aid of my hoe I hopped along and chopped cotton until Saturday afternoon, when I would return

home. When this job gave out, a friend and sheepman, Mr. Wm. Corbell, employed me for one dollar per week to herd sheep, he furnishing me a little mule to ride, as I could not yet walk.

We will let this single picture suffice to give you some idea of what can be borne and what can be overcome and utilized at last for our own good. Having stemmed such a stormy sea myself, I am prepared to deeply sympathize with every struggling, oppressed boy or young man. I have given you this outline of my combat in life to encourage you, if, like myself, Dame Fortune has never spread her silvery wings over your rugged pathway. Let me hold your manly hand while I look into your honest, sober face and repeat the words of the poet:

“Be still, sad heart, and cease repining,  
Behind the cloud is the sun still shining;  
Thy fate is the common fate of all,  
Into each life some rain must fall,  
Some days must be dark and dreary.”

In the summer of 1882, in company with several young friends, I attended a revival meeting at Patton, Texas, conducted by Rev. A. C. Graves. I could only attend at night, as I was hired to Mr. Wm. Wrigglesworth to herd sheep, and then went solely from a pleasurable standpoint. But the earnest, persuasive sermon of the consecrated divine found a responsive echo in my soul, and I was made to fully realize my lost condition

before God. As this ended the pleasure of my attendance, I never went back to the meeting any more. My impressions, however, clung to me assiduously, and as my vocation was one that was very conducive to reflection, I thought and prayed a great deal concerning my responsibility to God. My reflections and prayers only added to the anguish of my troubled soul, as I sought to rid myself of conscious guilt by forming good resolutions which I daily offered to God for a tranquil spirit. The offer was not accepted, as I fully realized, as it was not my good resolutions, but faith in His Son that were to be the terms of relief. As I had gone to the extent of my strength with no profit, I concluded to discard the subject as far as possible until another religious revival came in the community. Greatly to my delight, it was soon announced that the late lamented evangelist, Major W. E. Penn, would soon hold a tent meeting near Crawford. I at once made arrangements to attend this meeting from first to last. I was present on the grounds while the big tent was being put up. Brother Penn had one mourner before he ever laid eyes upon him. About the middle of this great meeting I was happily converted, and on the following Sabbath was baptized in Middle Bosque creek by this noble man of God, whose labors on earth are finished, but whose influence for good shall be felt till the blessed Lord shall come back to receive His people unto Himself. My membership was soon transferred

from Crawford to its present place—Shiloh—where it has been ever since, with two or three short intervals, when I was not in the community, for I always asked for a letter that would identify me with the church elsewhere when I was to be away from home even for a few months. As soon as I united with my present church I was elected clerk, and served them in that capacity during my entire membership with them until I was ordained to preach. On the 26th day of November, 1889, I was licensed to preach, and was regularly ordained Sunday, October 26, 1890. I preached regularly once each month for the church the first two years after I was licensed, and have served the church ever since as pastor, the church calling me last October indefinitely. Rather an odd coincidence is, that pastor and two of the deacons were converted during the same meeting, and have been members of the same church ever since. Since my public work began, I have had the pleasure of assisting in building a good church house and school, the school house being in a half mile of the church. Since the organization of the school, three years since, it has been my privilege to teach three successive school terms. I here give an extract from a review speech of the school at the close of the last session:

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*

“The second term of the school evinced the necessity for enlarging the house, which was done during the fall of 1894. Here again, as in all cases, some helped none,

some a little, while others shouldered the burden of the expense.

“This leads us to take a backward glance of the character and progress of the school during its three years’ work. Here we find much to excite gratitude, and little to cause complaint. No teacher was ever blessed with more charitable and liberal-minded patrons than we. The few complaints have been mild and reasonable, and the kindness and patronage liberal. We have had no ‘constitutional kickers’ to turn our sweets to bitter. Shakespeare’s ‘Man’s inhumanity to man’ has found no occasion of illustration in the bounds of our little school. But several times have we felt the sweetness of Paul’s ‘Behold, how good and how pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity!’ As to our students, they have conducted themselves in a way highly worthy of their parents and themselves. How fondly will we ever cherish their gentlemanly deportment and respectful bearings. How ardently will we ever watch them as they climb the hill of life, and how glad we will ever be when an opportunity offers itself to lend a helping hand with means, tongue or pen. How ready we will ever be to weep when they weep, and to rejoice when they rejoice. Never have we observed a school of students more kind to each other, and more respectful to their teacher. For our successor, we could not ask more than that he receive the mark of respect that we have.

“For three successive years, we have watched with

deepest interest everything that pertains to their happiness; and just here I rejoice to say that during the three years I have had the honor of being their teacher, I have never heard a profane word spoken by one of them. That such has never been the case, I cannot say, but I have played on the campus and bathed in the creek with them, and I am sure that such expressions have not found way into their common phraseology. We have never had a fight. In short, have never had a real disrespectful thing to occur. The progress of some of the students has been marked; others have made fair success, while but few have really been 'drags.'

"To Him who is over all, we are profoundly grateful to say, that not a single link in our chain has been snapped by death. Once or twice our faint hearts have been made to fear, but just as the storm seemed to rage with most violence, and cause us to apprehend the worst, a star of hope would break through the cloud and cause us to rejoice.

"Rudely and inartistically, with our own hands, we made the words upon the wall, 'God bless our school.' With reverence and fear we formed the cards into letters, the letters into words, and the words into a request. Daily from our heart have we repeated it, and now as we stand before you, perhaps for the last time, as teacher, we most gratefully acknowledge our thanks to God for His blessings.

"Concerning our work, we do not suppose for a mo-

ment that it is beyond criticism. Some of you thought that we should do thus and so, while others thought another way would be better. But however much better others' ways would have been for them, ours suited us better, and hence we followed our own judgment.

“And now a word to our students: Whatever imperfect you may have observed in us, we ask that you extend the charity that you would accept. Eliminate the bad and take the good. Keep up your good record. Strive to become nobler and wiser. Select for your ideal a high one. Never be satisfied at the foot of the ladder. Remember, if you fail in life, it will be your fault. Remember, you are never whipped until you whip yourself. Remember, you are never ruined until you despise and ignore your God. Remember, ‘’Tis not all of life to live, nor all of death to die.’ Be true; be honest; be kind; be polite. Make life a success and heaven your home. And now, in the language of the great English Quaker, ‘My love salutes you all!’”

As soon as my impressions to preach reached a final decision, I felt at once that my education was the next duty enjoined upon me. By close economy, I had saved up three or four hundred dollars. With this I entered school at once at Baylor University, and spent about twenty-five months there, when I was forced to stop on account of funds.

On the night of November 1, 1893, in my church, I was happily married to Miss Clara McMahan, a member



of my church. So you see there are many things that evince my devotion to my church—being really married to it. My venerable old college president, Dr. R. C. Burleson, officiated on this memorable occasion.

Thus you have an outline of what I have been in the past. If you are a prophet, you can guess what I will be in the future. As for me, I cannot tell what the future has in store for me. I cannot read the providence of God with reference to my future; but by His grace I hope to make a wise use of my allotted time on earth. I hope to build some monument of honor and love that will bless my fellowman after the dust of death has settled upon my speechless lips.

## THE BENEFITS OF OBSERVATION.

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The fact that we come into the world with two keen, clear eyes is very suggestive of the use we should make of them and the benefits we should derive therefrom. While they afford us much pleasure in beholding the many attractions of nature, and doubtless this is one purpose conceived by God in creating the organ of sight, yet we cannot believe this the only purpose. For while they afford us pleasure in seeing the beautiful side of life, they also cause us pain in seeing things that we could wish never to have seen. Before passing this feature, however, let us say that much can be done to promote our happiness by cultivating the habit of seeing the beautiful side of life. The gentle breeze, the sparkling, babbling, onward course of the little brook; the waving grain, nodding to and fro like a happy, playful child; the songs of the birds and the gleefulness of their spirits, are all lessons full of instruction to every apt student of nature.

The year that I was fourteen, I was hired to a farmer who was one of those strange make-ups of humanity—a good man, but an eccentric; both good-natured and cruel; sometimes pleasant and talkative, other times nothing could prompt a smile or induce a conversation.

He seemed to think a great deal of me, and didn't like me much either. I was naturally inquisitive, and as he was my only companion, I propounded many questions to him. I usually kept both eyes open and saw nearly everything that passed before my observation; and like most of children, I thought grown people knew everything. So I very confidently placed all my queer things before him, and demanded a solution; but I was so often and so repeatedly met with, "You must learn this by observation," that it made a deep impression on my mind, and I began to seek the solution of my own inquiries, partly because I knew I would get no satisfaction out of him, and because I was really beginning to enjoy finding out for myself, or, "learning by observation."

Occasionally I wished to recall something that had passed before my observation previously, and would find that I had not critically observed. I would want to use a word I had read in a book and learned the meaning of, but would not remember how it was spelled. So I more and more realized the value of "observation."

What it has been to me is summed up in what I am. At least three-fourths of my education has come to me in this way.

To give you an approximate idea of the extent to which it has helped me, I will mention one feature of my education: Punctuation. Perhaps this is the most difficult feature of grammar and rhetoric to master; and

yet I do not believe I exaggerate when I say, that before I ever opened an English grammar, or before I knew whether I was a masculine or feminine gender, I could punctuate my letters more correctly than many students who had gone through and passed on these studies.

In proof of this, I have inserted several articles just as they were written and punctuated by me before I ever entered school or studied the question as a science. Had I been called upon to give my reasons, of course I could not have done so, only I could have soon found an example in some book of mine.

This is only one instance I mention; but its benefits to me have been of incalculable good.

So I conclude this chapter by saying, lift up your eyes; behold and see! The world is full of interesting things to the observer; full of instructions to the inquiring mind; and constantly unfolding her storehouse of rich treasures to the imperative curiosity.

He who sees best sees most, no matter whither he goes, nor where he runs his race.

## HEAR THE OTHER SIDE.

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When a jury is empaneled they must hear both sides before they can render a verdict. Experience has demonstrated the wisdom of this law, and just as wisely could it be carried into every avenue of life. Two facts make this obvious at once: The more or less degree of prejudice possessed by us all, and the fallibility of the mind which provides for the possibility of error in giving the details of an occurrence.

Some people who keep very few tools in their possession, always keep a pick and spade, and are ready at the earliest possible moment to dig a grave in which to lay their fellowman to rest (?). They don't have to have even as much persuasion as Pilate, when he beheaded John the Baptist, to take off some good neighbor's head.

Jesus could read men's hearts when engaged in their redemption, and sometimes the very one that others would condemn he would speak to in approving terms. And so we believe it yet is. Many who others would stone, have the blessed approbation of heaven.

Since, however, we cannot read the hearts of our fellowman, we must defer judgment until we "Hear the other side"—see them from the various standpoints of

life. A fragmentary judgment is oftener wrong than otherwise. Perhaps we can all recall neighbors of whom we were wrongly informed, and maybe with whom we were wrongly impressed at first, but who on a more intimate acquaintance impressed us in many things of our own short-comings.

Waiting to render a decision, especially when your own interest is not involved, is safe, and exceedingly charitable; while hasty conclusions are often deceptive, and sometimes criminal.

A pair of perfect balances would tilt with even a little chaff in one side, but a very small quantity of wheat would pitch the chaff very high.

Public men, especially preachers and teachers, come in for a greater share of cruelty from a one-sided verdict than any other two classes. The greatest benefactors of humanity; the ones to whom civilization is indebted for her present acquisitions, and the ones to whom she yet looks to pilot her to the zenith of nations—it seems strange that they should be the reproach of every slanderous tongue. But it is only a lengthened cord that left its reproachful scars around the necks of the Israelites, for their ingratitude to God and their faithful leader, and for which ingratitude it was not given unto them to know the resting place of him whose face they had seen aglow with heavenly splendor, and whom they had seen come down from Sinai's awful phenomena bearing the law of God.

I have given some little attention to the study of the anatomy of the brain, but I have not been able to find any reason why one should more readily credit a harmful statement than one of merit, but that such is true observation confirms.

Let us all wash our hands in innocency and wait to "Hear the other side" before we render a verdict.

## SELECTING A LIFE CALLING.

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One of the most difficult problems, and doubtless one of the most important, that confronts nearly every worthy young man when he contemplates life for himself, is: "What calling or profession shall I select?" Oft times this puzzling question begins presenting itself to the more ambitious boy by the time he has reached his fourteenth year, and much of his meditation is spent in trying to reach a wise and safe solution of this knotty problem.

To ignore the importance of a decision is to jeopardize all the possibilities of life; but to reach an intelligible one is a difficulty that can only be estimated by the thousands of honest, sober toilers that are ever dependent upon the next day's income to supply the necessities of life.

For a father with several sons to decide which one must be a doctor, which one a merchant and which one a farmer, is a folly that fathers seem slow to understand.

In all the realm of nature it seems to have pleased the great Master-builder to make things unlike each other, and the human mind has not been an exception to this well-followed rule.

If, then, the love and experience of father do not



qualify him to decide this question for us, to whom must we look for guidance? If all my young friends were Christians, I could hand you the key at once that would unlock the door to this great question. For I believe God is willing, and even desirous, to direct His people in everything that pertains to their success and happiness, and to those of you who have already realized something of His guiding spirit, I unhesitatingly advise that you leave the matter entirely with Him and seek His directing hand.

But since many of you are not Christians, I must try also to help you out of the mist and fog of this perplexing question. With every one, who has ambition enough to succeed, there is an inclination towards certain things. The magnetic needle will point towards the poles because of an unseen, yet powerful influence exercised over it, and just so, your inclinations, if unbiased, are the effects of the moulding of the Great Designer, and should be the pattern by which you should shape your plans and purposes in life.

'Tis true, you might make some success in various vocations, but you retard the progress, and hazard the success by turning aside from the path blazed out for your guidance. The earth attracts many things to it, but the attraction is much greater for certain things than others, and certainly that which possesses the greatest degree of gravity will come in contact with it sooner than that of a lighter gravity.

You can graft good fruit in a very poor tree and get splendid fruit, but I am told, even then the fruit is of short life. Likewise you may attain a degree of success out of your natural sphere, but an unwise or overtaxing demand may suddenly drift your ship upon the rock and you awake only to learn that you are a bankrupt.

It is not necessary, however, to try everything you ever heard of before you reach a decision. But it may be well to "make haste slowly" in reaching a conclusion. It is desirable, however, that the end be reached as early as practical, since you will need considerable time for preparation.

Doubtless many of you have felt a strong impulse towards a certain profession, but after setting down and counting the cost you have reluctantly, but forever, abandoned your cherished vocation and fallen upon something that did not suit you, but that required less expense and less labor in preparation. If for the latter cause you have dropped into obscurity, then I have but few words of encouragement. For he who is not willing to toil continuously and laboriously is not worthy of success. But if for the former reason, then I have a word of encouragement and hope. The lack of funds necessary to prosecute the needed preparation for a calling has curbed many a noble ambition and chained and isolated many a genius, statesman and philanthropist, who, otherwise, might have painted many a sunrise

at which the world would be looking to-day and for which posterity would bless their memory.

But the facilities offered to every worthy young man of to-day would have inspired hope and assured success to the brave and noble spirits who have already run their Godly race, and to-day sleep in obscure graves. Educational advantages are far superior to even the last century. You are no longer compelled to leave home and travel a thousand miles to Yale or Harvard. In almost every State in the South there is a College or University of superior rank, that is welcoming her sons to come under her helping influence; while the opportunities for making the money is in the reach of every resolute, determined young man who is willing to fearlessly combat with difficulties.

Is poverty or ill environments to be regarded as an indication of low birth or meagre propensities? Let the dead past speak. Let history, with her storehouse of knowledge, answer this question, and the rich man's son shall blush with shame; while in the homes of poverty a noble impulse shall swell the manly breast and hope shall point her finger to the galaxy of fame.

History records no reformations, nor deeds of philanthropy, whose actors have not felt, at least, the pinch of moderate want. If we trace the noblest achievements of human genius to its origin, we must follow it back through winding pathways, from illumined halls, from the deafening thunder of human applause, to the quiet,

dim-lighted cottage of poverty. From the thousands of unpainted, unparlored homes that dot the land here and there, have come forth the purest examples of human benefactors and the brightest luminaries that have girdled the globe.

Let not poverty's pinching presence cause you to select a vocation for which you are not suited and with which you would not be satisfied. Be courageous, surmount each difficulty that presents itself, keep up good spirits, and some day you may have occasion to even bless the days of your want and denial. Remember, that it is the law of force and resistance upon which all creative and reproductive power depend. It is the power of the curbed steam within and the mighty boiler without that speeds the thunderous engine with its train of human souls along the steel road from the little village and city to the great metropolis of the world.

If you really have the "steam" within, your poverty is really the iron boiler to enable it to accumulate greater force, and at last speed you across the river valleys and over the mountain heights to the center of influence and opportunity.

In this chapter we have tried to help you reach a safe conclusion in selecting a calling for life, and to encourage you to undertake great things, even though fortune has never smiled upon you in your youthful days. The legacy we ask is that some now-struggling boy who has well-nigh "fainted by the way," come to us in some

future day and tell us he took courage from reading this chapter, and has verified its correctness in his own life. We conclude with an extract from the matchless Psalm of Life, by Longfellow:

In the world's broad field of battle,  
In the bivouac of life,  
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!  
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no fortune, howe'er pleasant!  
Let the dead past, bury its dead!  
Act—act in the living present!  
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us,  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time.

Footprints, that perhaps another,  
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,  
With a heart for any fate;  
Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labor and to wait.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS.

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In the economy of the divine arrangement of things, God has seen fit to place a very grave responsibility on parents in teaching and training their offspring.

Perhaps the most defenseless of all things is the infant in its innocence, when first handed to the mother as the fruit of the womb, "Bone of her bone, and flesh of her flesh." Well may any fallible mortal shudder at the responsibility of training and shaping the destiny of an immortal soul!

The very nature of the child makes it absolutely necessary that some one come to his assistance, and daily, as life continues to unfold itself, to give the right directions to his inquiring and curious thoughts.

The human mind has been compared to a "sheet of paper white," and every answer, every look, every act of the parent before the child leaves its impress indelibly. Each example is as the pen of a ready writer. The parent is to the child what the compass is to the mariner—his guide upon the trackless ocean. Parent, do think of it. How great the opportunity! How grave the responsibility! You are to your child what the sun is to the solar system—the center of attraction. Each word is a revelation in his heart, and each day before

him is a revolution in life's orbit. "Like parents like children." "Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined." "I'll take what father takes" is echoed and reechoed from generation to generation. Education is something, but parentage is everything. It "dyes in the wool," and thereby exerts an influence almost infinitely more powerful than all other influences combined. Skilled, indeed, must be the teacher or preacher who can break the bad influence left by a parent. Wisely did Solomon say, not to the teacher, preacher or lawmaker, but the parent: "Train up the child in the way he should go, and when he is *old* he will not depart from it." "Better that a millstone was tied around his neck and cast into the sea than to offend one of these little ones that believe in me."

Have you bemoaned the mistakes of your own life, the wrong habits formed in youth that have clung to you with relentless power ever since? Then begin now to correct them by teaching your children to avoid them. Give them the benefit of your own mistakes.

The great fault with most parents is, not for lack of sufficient knowledge, but carelessness. They allow their sons to keep bad company, without ever asking themselves the question as to their companions. Remember, the sneak whose infamous words are blackening the mind of your boy, will not use them in your presence. We speak a word of warning along this line from recent observation. Several times have we found your sons in

company with those that do not regard your wishes nor instructions to your boys. Had you thought, you might have guessed, at least, that they belonged to the smutty-mouthed class. Be assured, father, mother, that "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Every obscene picture, whether narrated by some half-witted, good-for-nothing fellow, or painted by the hand of the artist, will leave its blackening, degrading influence upon the mind of your child. Better furnish them more entertainment at home, and keep them from bad company. If their desires to go increase, remember, it is conclusive proof of the rapidity of the work of the despoiler. You should carefully survey every feature of the allurements that attract your son from the parental roof.

Another almost universal mistake of parents, and especially of mothers, is too much confidence in their own children. "Love covers a multitude of faults," and while you are wise in premising the results of bad association upon your neighbors' children, you some how or other believe your boy to be just a little better and stronger than most boys, and that you may safely risk more than would ordinarily be safe for others. Again, with all possible emphasis, we repeat the scriptural injunction: "Evil communications corrupt *good* manners." Please notice how fully and completely this declaration of Holy Writ undermines your argument. It declares that it is *good* manners that are corrupted by bad associations.



The bright, cheery youth upon your knee to-day with a light, happy heart and with a plastic mind so susceptible of good or bad training, is soon to go out into life with his habits formed and his character made. As you look into his sunny face to-day, and watch the expressions of love and confidence so easily read in his open, frank countenance, you cannot fail to recognize that you have an opportunity for good measured only by the responsibility enjoined upon you.

After his brief youthful years shall have developed into young manhood, and he goes out into life as a representative of home training, will his bearings reflect honor and credit upon the home that reared him? Will you have reason to be proud of him whose manners and physique betray him as your son, or will you blush for shame when his name is mentioned in your presence? Is he to be a staff to your declining days, or a sting and reproach to your gray hairs? These are no idle, dream-land questions, but burning, living, searching ones. To ignore them is the greatest of folly. They are the principles that make the difference between the statesman and the penitentiary convict; the man of worth and the thing improperly called a man; the kind father and loving husband, and the cruel monarch and crushing despot. At last they are the foundation pillars that make the difference between heaven and hell, eternal happiness and everlasting ruin.

Do you prize the happiness of your child? his well-

being and usefulness in life? Then teach him the virtues alone worthy of him; and remember, your examples are more potent than your precepts.

Shall I close this chapter and lay the pen aside now and leave this momentous question with each parent to dispose of according to their own feelings? Have I accomplished my object? Have I gained my point? My fingers still cling to the pen as though the question has not yet been fully settled. O, God, direct my fingers to write letters of fire, words that will burn parents' hearts.

Mother, you implanted the first kiss on his innocent cheek; from you he drew the first draught of life; you it was that so fondly caressed him as the idol of your heart. He was given to you to be trained for immortal glory; to be given back at last to the bosom of God. Father, do you realize that he is watching and weighing every act of your life, your silence and indifference as well as your words and acts? Do you know that to-day many a father's son is in hell? Do you know that hell is nearest your son of anything unseen? And do you know that that may be his home, and you the cause of it? Do you flatter yourself that this will never be true of your flesh and blood? So did every other father whose son is now burning in hell.

And now this brings up another question of eternal moment: Are you a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus? Have you a Christian heart to give the proper impulses to life? If not, I submit a most tangible ques-

tion: "Can a bitter fountain send forth sweet water?" Had you not better take God into your heart and home, and have His spirit to help you teach your children the way of life? It is awful for your son to make his home in hell, but sadder still for you to go before and thereby blaze the road for him.

And now we bring this subject to its close. We have asked God to help us write it. Both the writer and reader will some day stand before the solemn and awful bar of God, and each be judged for writing and reading. Till then, farewell!

FRIENDSHIP.

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The human heart is a never-failing fountain of passions and impulses. To these must be given a compass to give the right directions, or otherwise they would drift us into stormy seas and under cloudy skies. This compass we will call *love*—the power and strength of friendship. For it is the essence of true friendship, and there can be no real friendship that is not founded on this principle. There is an ocean of difference between passing courtesy and genuine friendship. The one is bestowed by the multitudes on the one favored with position, the other shines with resplendent glory from the few on him upon whom Dame Fortune has never smiled; upon one not on the mountain of human glory, but in the valley of social death.

Indeed the world is bad enough, too bad, but to the extent that genuine friendship gives way and people become only passing friends, will it grow worse. Its ultimate ruin is completed the day that the entire race begins to pray:

“Lord have mercy on me and my wife,  
My son John and his wife;  
Us four—no more.”

And yet some are really praying this prayer. Two

things are necessary to the formation of real friendship, namely: Excellence of character and a knowledge of that excellence. The two robbers who plot and pillage together cannot be said to be friends, for those excellences of character are wanting that excite this state of feeling. They hide and rob together for mutual protection and assistance, and for the slightest cause they betray each other in the very moment of peril.

Again, some will play the part of a friend to get your influence or to borrow your money, but the main ingredient is lacking that establishes true friendship, and as soon as the artificial cause is removed the friendship (?) fades away like a snowflake before the fire.

Genuine friendship ripens slowly and falls reluctantly. The first gale may bend its bough, but it will require some frost as well as wind to cause it to let go.

To some of us this would be a dreary old world but for the pleasure and strength of friendship, and I write this chapter hoping to increase the number of friends for all who may chance to read these lines. "Love begets love," and those who would have friends must first show themselves friendly. With me, a friend is one thing that pertains to this world that has no marketable value. They are always above par. The market is always on the increase. The demand always exceeds the supply. Judas sold his friend for thirty pieces of silver, but I would not part with one of mine for the richest gold mine in California. Bitter regret

fills my breast whenever death robs me of a friend, and it is ever with a struggle that I say: "Not my will, Lord, but thine be done."

The love of Romeo and Juliet lifted them above the strife of their houses; just so can friendship elevate two souls above the common causes that rend asunder neighbors and communities where this tie is not mutual. The inspired writer declared that every other grace might fail, but *charity* never fails.

The bearings of friendship are as varied as the wants and weaknesses of humanity. To the cautious and distrustful it speaks words of encouragement. To the weak it extends a helping hand. To the bold and overconfident it has a word of caution. It weeps with those that weep and rejoices with those that rejoice. Poverty makes no wrinkle on its face, and in the hour of need it presses the hand tighter than ever before. Reader, have you one single friend among your many friends (?) that you would count upon in any emergency; one that will stay with you through evil as well as good report? Then press that one to your bosom as you would an only son. Cherish him as you would a ray of sunshine through a prison window.

Few men have sufficient steel to travel very far the rugged paths of struggle without the inspiration of some sympathizing friend to light up the dark places. Even in the Garden of Eden God saw that it was not good for man to be alone. Rob him of his friends and

he becomes as a bird robbed of his plumage—fixed to the earth. The most painful trials of those who fall from affluence to poverty is the discovery of the loss of friends. Real friends are modest and retiring during one's prosperity, but present and ready in adversity. Alas! how many, when sifted, fall through the seive. But this only makes the genuine more appreciable.

“Old friends!” How sacred the phrase. How magical the expression. How many sacred memories of the past swell the breast at the utterance of these words. What a multitude of incidents crowd the brain when they are spoken. By-gone years, with happy memories; kind words; gentle hands; friendly faces; all flood the mind like the accumulated, but now overflowing, waters of some long-winding rivulet. Then awakened, as from a long slumber, appear the forms of departed friends who have long since crossed over the river, and with a strange attraction they seem to draw us to them. We feel ourselves yielding to this winding cord, and in almost living reality we are holding again each others' hand and happily musing over the past.

Yes, the tie that binds true friendship is stronger than death, and the years of eternity will only brighten the chain that bound us together on earth.

I can wish for each of my readers nothing more than I do for myself—many true and loving friends. And I offer to you all I ask in return—my hand, my pledge, my prayers.

THE MORNING, NOON AND EVENING OF LIFE.

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This threefold subject, like the trinity found in all nature, makes the circuit of a chain we call *life*, and Pope has well said: "The proper study of mankind is man." From each of these standpoints that we have adopted, there are many lessons of value to be gleaned; many truths worthy of consideration, and many that we all ought to know and realize.

From infancy to manhood we term as the *morning* of life; from the commencement of manhood to the beginning of the decline of life, the *noon* of life, and from the decline of life to the grave, the *evening* of life.

More than half of the human family die in the morning of life; a good per cent under the meridian of life, and the remainder file out at the setting of the great sun. "It is assigned unto man once to die," and none escape.

Let us now commence with the first division of our subject. And stupid is that student of nature that has failed to find much to interest him, even in the innocent ways of the helpless babe nestling on its mother's breast. Cold is he to the sweetest and best sensibilities of the heart, that has not been touched by the magic influence of the helpless infant, as it confidingly lifts its baby hands, and without articulate sounds, but never-



theless, in a language unmistakable, says: "Take me up; please take me up!" Everything that is innocent, frank and trusting in the human heart is here presented in its highest type. None of the ugly scars of ripper years have yet marred the beauty of its face. No guilty conscience reproves it for sins committed; the tricks of deception are all yet to be learned; and the first real disappointment yet to be felt. Blissful days! Pity this golden thread is not longer! That it does not extend to the other end of life! But if this is not to be, I am glad that we have examples here and there, all through life, to remind us that once we, to say the least, were better than we now are.

Let us come back to this infant state, this bud of life, and see what possibilities we have before us. Will we call it a hot-house plant? No, 'tis more delicate than that! Shall we compare it to a star fastened in the galaxy of stars? No, for it must shine after the brightest star has grown pale with the wear of age! It must exist in eternal reality after the star-gemmed heavens have sung the last song of creation's glory. After the lingering, yet dying, notes of concord have produced the last melody of harmony. In this plastic state of life there are possibilities as high as heaven, and probabilities as deep as hell. A few years, presenting a few pictures and drawing a few conclusions, developes a benefactor to bless the world, or a stigma to corrupt and mildew it.

Let me say some earnest words to those in this period of life, that are old enough to comprehend some simple statements. Whether or not the stream so far on its journey can be turned and made to flow in some other direction, it is certain that the tendency is to flow over the paths made smooth by the silent, yet sure work of the waves. In the fact that you are the architect of your own fortune, I must here remind you that you are certainly laying the foundation in the *morning* of life, and no superstructure can far exceed the foundation. If the foundation is not as broad as the main structure, the building must necessarily be weak and very much exposed to the stronger gales.

We may very correctly admit that "Man is a bundle of habits," and while habits are those things held by us, it is equally true that they hold us. Hence, the great importance of forming correct ones. With the habits of some men, like a lead tied to your neck, you can never hope to accomplish any real good for yourself or for your fellowman. They seem to be small things, of little consequence, as day by day we weave them into the fabric of life, but like the spinning and twisting of thread after thread that makes the strong cable that holds the proud ship, so are the habits of a couple of decades upon the life of every young man.

Morning of life! Beautiful! Powerful! Eternal! Good-bye! Farewell until we meet at the judgment day. The whistle has blown; the ship is at the wharf

of *noon*, and I must step off and take passage on another ship that will sail rougher seas.

The sun is now at the meridian. The rays strike the earth perpendicularly. The heat has reached its maximum and exerts its greatest influence upon the earth.

A man has stepped upon the stage of action. He takes a part in the great arena of life. He is going to make other hearts lighter or yet heavier. He is going to scatter sunshine or becloud its rays. He will either bless or curse the earth upon which he treads. He is going to honor or blaspheme the God who gave him his existence. He is going to fill an honored grave or draw the cloak of a traitor around his dying couch. At last he will bask in the bright sunlight of heaven or wander as a lost star the realms of eternal night.

Just which picture he will at last, at the Great Day, represent is blindness to conjecture. I would persuade him, for God's glory, his good, and the good of others, to be the former.

Like the great Apostle, as he looks back over the happy days of youth, he thinks: "When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child," but now, as he surveys the battlefield of stern realities, he exclaims: "But when I became a man I put away childish things." Yes, they are gone! Like everything pertaining to this life, their moments are swift and their hours few. They have passed to the

home of "By-gones," and are entombed in the sepulchre of relics of the past.

He has left the parental roof and friendly fireside, and is beginning to realize that, "Things are not what they seem."

Life is no longer a dream. It is no more a fairyfield of sweet-scented flowers, humming-birds and golden-winged butterflies. It has scorching suns, withering winds and imperative duties.

The hours of idle speculation must now be engaged in building the bridge upon which to cross the swollen stream of after years. The granary labeled, "For the rainy day" must be filled now or not at all. This is the busy period of life. Not so much time to sharpen now, but to thrust in the cycle and test the temper of the steel. All the rents of the past have become due and must be settled, or we have the announcement of a bankrupt.

For all of this, it is, if rightly used, the best part of life. It is the running water that gladdens the flowers on the distant shore, and so it is usually the busiest life that does the most good in the world.

Before this period much of our knowledge was speculative or theoretical. Now we are doers, as well as hearers. We are getting knowledge by the sweat of the brow, or from the midnight oil. It is now purchased knowledge, and possesses an intrinsic value.

The noon of life is the time for renovating and brush-

ing up the past. Every life has some dross. Even under the most favorable circumstances, and by the most painstaking care on our part, we will grow into manhood with habits and dispositions that would be better for us not to have. As these appear to us, one by one, we should not despair, but earnestly seek to rid ourselves of these ill-gotten guests.

Standing between the two extremes of life, with the one still fresh in memory, and the stream gently drifting us towards the other, we should be kind and considerate to the youth, and thoughtful and respectful towards the advanced in life.

But, perchance, our busy friend has not time for a long chat with us; he seems restless and anxious to go. Possibly he realizes that much is yet to be done, and but little time in which to do it, and just down the road we see one who seems more talkative, and seems to possess a seriousness that would indicate more thoughtfulness of a friend's counsel.

So we will bid our busy friend adieu and move on down the line and blaze the road where he will shortly come.

The sun is moving towards the western shore. The ocean seems to be rising up to meet her tardy friend. The western horizon seems to be dipping her sails in the Pacific and then bathing them in the mellow rays of an evening sun. Nature seems to have tightened up on

the reins and is communing somewhat with the powers that be ordained.

The ground upon which we stand is holy. Let us uncover our heads and tread softly. There is something in those gray hairs that sets us to thinking, and then we hear a voice from heaven saying: "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." The lamp of life has well nigh burned dry. "The day is far spent, the night is at hand." Character has crystalized. There may be many things undesirable in this life, but they will continue with it to the grave. He has become satisfied without daily invoking Divine blessing and lifting up his heart in humble gratitude for their numerous bestowals. He has not been accustomed to calling his family around the fireside and instructing them in the way of life eternal; neither will he likely ever do so, save, perhaps, in his departing hour. He has lived without God, and despite the solicitude of friends and loved ones, possibly, will die without Him. But let us draw the curtain around this picture and pray: "Forbid, Father! Lord God, forbid!"

There is another picture to be found in the evening of life that we had rather paint—that we had rather hang on your parlor wall. This, to us, is the ideal picture. The background has shady groves and living ferns. The skylight is soft and mellow. The artist seems to have focused his skill in doing the work. The face is wrinkled, but those wrinkles look like furrows from

which rich harvests have been gathered. The large, steel gray eyes seem to have lost some of their former lustre, but it was exchanged for expressions of human kindness and sympathy. The locks that adorn the reverend head have whitened with the weight of years, but each one knows something of human sorrow and aching hearts. His face is turned towards the western sky, and he has forgotten that he sits in the artist's chair, and is watching the setting sun. Slowly it has been moving through the heavens, and is now sinking behind the hill. Its golden rays, like a well trained artist, is painting up the evening sky. He now remembers his friend by his side, and gains his attention by a sudden change of expression, and then lifts his hand and points towards the distant west. Reaching out and taking the hand of his companion, he presses it gently while he still points towards the western horizon with the other, and with accents of an uprising hope, he exclaims:

“ My latest sun is sinking fast,  
My race is nearly run;  
My strongest trials now are past,  
My triumph is begun! ”

The setting of a great hope is like the setting of the sun. The tempests of life have blown over. The mist has cleared away, and the evening sky is bright and tranquil. Many expectations have proven to be only bubbles upon the ocean of time; but with their disappearance has come the realization that there is a divinity

that shapes our ends; and truly "Things are not what they seem." Many of the visions of youth were only dreams of the imagination; and well it is that they were, for "Things are not what they seem."

The once repulsive thoughts concerning age take on a different aspect when we find ourselves afloat upon its bosom. There are many rich experiences that abound in consolation to those in old age that cannot be the companion of busy days and the buoyant spirit. Every season has its fruits, and many of the sweetest flowers bloom only in the winter. Likewise, each season has its blasts, and age has sheltered itself from those common to early life. No one could really wish to live life over unless permitted to begin it with the experiences of the past as a compass to point out the places to be avoided. Could we go back and take with us our experiences, all good people would desire to make the journey over; but if we are to climb the same hills and fall over the same impediments, but few, if any, would say: "Give me my youth again, and let me repeat its follies over!"

But now, as we approach the close of our chapter, conscience asks why we have written, and one answer only seems worthy of a man: To help, to benefit those who read. Who will read? Some aged father, some friend under the evening sky of life; perchance, some one nearing life's terminus, who may appreciate some earnest, honest words, and who may read but few more chapters this side of the river called "Death."



Your life we cannot tell you about, neither is it necessary that we should, for you know about that; but we may venture, with the light of revelation, to tell you something about the "Great Beyond," into which you are soon to be introduced. Now, if never before, it matters not what your earthly environments have been. It is, so far as concerns you individually (and this is the time when it is right for our concern to be for ourselves), of no importance whether or not success and fortune have been yours, for they are nothing more nor less than the accidental circumstances surrounding an ephemeral existence. Viewing it from the light of eternity, there is but little difference whether that existence was passed in the arms of wealth and luxury, or struggling for the necessities of life.

Death will bring us all to a common level. God is no respecter of persons, and death has no friends. The king and the peasant, the rich and the poor are alike in this respect. Hand in hand, the long train of Adam's posterity march to the grave.

But at this great depot the road forks. One road goes over the hill capped with snow, the other down the "valley of the shadow of death." This world is the ticket office, and Christ and the Devil are the agents. They both furnish through tickets only; no lay-offs at any point. The ticket over the snow-capped mountain reads, "Immanuel," written in blood. The one through the "valley of the shadow of death" reads, "Broad-

gauge," enameled with gold. I would earnestly advise all who expect to take passage over one or the other of these roads, to get their tickets beforehand if you are choice of routes. Be careful how your tickets read, for any mistake is fatal and irreversible. Besides this, the law requires that they be duly stamped and signed before the hour of departure.

Possibly my extended illustration has broken the force of the truth intended. Let us say, again: You are, my friend, about to settle up with this world, and take your departure for the home from whence no traveler ever returns. The voice of wisdom cries out: "Be you also ready, for in an hour ye think not the son of man cometh." Having made the most of this life, let me urge you to be equally wise concerning the life to come, and as the quiet hours of the few remaining days go by, may you be able to fully realize the thoughts expressed below:

" One sweetly, solemn thought,  
Comes to me o'er and o'er:  
I'm nearer home to-day, to-day,  
Than I have been before.

" Nearer my father's house,  
Where many mansions be;  
Nearer the great white throne to-day,  
Nearer the crystal sea.

" Nearer the bound of life,  
Where burdens are laid down;

Nearer to leave the cross to-day,  
And nearer to the crown.

“Be near me when my feet  
Are slipping o’er the brink;  
For I am nearer home to-day,  
Perhaps, than now I think.”

## THAT NEGLECTED BIBLE.

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We may neglect many things that demand attention at our hands and suffer bitter consequences therefrom, but the grand total when compared to the consequences of neglecting the Bible are of but trifling import. Nature makes her demands, and their observance is important. Society makes her demands and we respect them. Heaven claims an interest and calls for recognition of her rights. To ignore her demands is as unscientific as it would be for a geologist to ignore the existence of granite, while it will require eternity to comprehend the folly of such procedure.

When we consider God, surrounded with such attributes as holiness, justice and independence, and man, not only lacking these, but possessed of their very opposite and antagonistic, we may well marvel that He has revealed Himself to us; and it can only be explained by adding to Him another attribute—love! “Charity” never fails, but it was never more highly magnified than in the gift of the Bible to a disobedient and sinful race.

With this thought before us, it becomes infinitely wonderful that we should refuse such information, or fail to get it at any cost. Information concerning God’s fixed and unalterable law, by which sinful and ruined

man may get back to God and enjoy the sunshine of His everlasting love. Blessed Bible—book of God! Teaching me how to live, teaches me also how to die! How strangely solemn that man should refuse to let heavenly light shine in his benighted soul; that he has lying on his parlor table a message from the skies that points out conditions of citizenship in that star-lit clime, and he allowing everything to dim its pages, but the often trace of finger prints. Neglected book! Man's best friend! Wonder if thy Author sees thy neglect? When justice is dealt out to man, what will be thy charge?

“Read, then; but first thyself prepare  
To read with zeal and mark with care;  
And when thou readest what is writ,  
Let thy best practice second it;  
So twice each precept read shall be,  
First in the book, and next in thee.”

Another sin that must deeply pain every truly pious heart is to note how many read and never obey the plainest precepts of the sacred Scriptures. They forget that, “To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” Mortal man should have no will but to obey when he reads God's standard by which he is to be judged, and the principles upon which his eternal destiny depends. Yet, the many and broad differences of the sects confirm the old adage:

“Convince a man against his will,  
He's of the same opinion still.”

Friendly reader, this book, containing Jehovah's mind, has been sealed with the blood of His son, and you had better die, die as if by stealth, than to read and not obey.

“Within this awful volume lies  
The mystery of mysteries;  
Happiest they of human race,  
To whom our God has given grace  
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,  
To lift the latch, to force the way;  
And better had he ne'er been born  
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn.”

Mr. Webster, when once asked what was the most serious thing in life to him, replied, his responsibility to God. This must be the same of all sane people who accept the Bible as a revelation from heaven. How then are we to know His will concerning us? Philosophy fails to shed much light upon the question. “Man by wisdom knew not God.” Science, since, according to the calculations of men, reaches different conclusions nearly each century, hence cannot be relied upon. Much of our science, even at the present period of human attainments, is like Paul's “Science falsely so-called.” Where, then, is the rope that swings man away from earth to heaven? The Bible, God's address of welcome to man. “I am the way.” Here, and only here, is the information to be found that man can afford to launch out into a stormy sea upon. This only is a rock foundation, and the voice of wisdom cries out to her children: “Build here, build here!”

Let us take a farewell look at this dear old book as containing information that we think man should blush before angels and saints to confess his ignorance of. Let us imagine a congregation of saints in heaven conversing with one another concerning the heroes of faith and their victories, concerning the covenant of redemption and its execution, and when it becomes your time to tell some one of these stories that oftentimes had filled your heart with joy and called forth expressions of praise to the glory of God, you have to blushingly confess that you know nothing of such things. Then imagine again the surprise of your company, as they ask to know if you did not own God's history of these things. "Ah! yes, I for many years owned this sacred volume, but its stories I have yet to learn." Let a tear be dropped, and may God be merciful!

At last, when the blessed old household is beginning to sever those heaven-appointed relations, when you, mother, father, shall lie down and die, and be followed and mourned by loved ones to your last and long rest; when, with throbbing heart and aching brow, your dear boy feels that he is alone in the cold world, will he find comfort and help in the following verses?

"This book is all that's left me now—

Tears will unbidden start;

With faltering lip and throbbing brow

I press it to my heart.

## SOME THINGS UNDER THE SUN.

For many generations past  
Here is our family tree,  
My mother's hands this Bible clasped,  
She, dying, gave it me.

"Ah, well do I remember those  
Whose names these records bear!  
Who round the hearthstone used to close  
After the evening prayer,  
And speak of what these pages said  
In tones my heart would thrill;  
Though they are with the silent dead,  
Here they are living still.

"My father read this holy book,  
To brothers, sisters dear;  
How calm was my poor mother's look,  
Who loved God's word to hear.  
Her angel face—I see it yet!  
What thronging memories come!  
Again that little group is met  
Within the halls of home.

"Thou truest friend man ever knew,  
Thy constancy I've tried;  
When all were false I've found thee true,  
My counselor and guide.  
The minds of earth no treasures give  
That could this volume buy;  
In teaching me the way to live,  
It taught me how to die,"



## HOW I CAME TO JOIN THE BAPTISTS.

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Immediately after my conversion, of which I referred to in the first chapter of this book, the questions of baptism and church connections presented themselves for consideration. I felt especially anxious to be baptized. I was not willing to defer it any considerable length of time. I felt that it was a very solemn duty and a very delightful privilege. But what denomination to attach myself to I was very much undecided. I knew nothing about the teaching of the New Testament, and a very little about the several faiths of the denominations around me, viz: Baptists, Presbyterians and Methodists. I had often heard the Baptists reproachfully spoken of as "close communionists," and naturally thought in this they were narrow and selfish. I very much preferred their mode of baptism, but knew I could receive this also from the other faiths mentioned.

Having mentally run through these questions a few times, never having mentioned them to any one, this thought fastened itself upon my mind: "Of all the religious denominations in the world, some *one* of them must be Christ's church, and only *one* of them. Things differing from each other could not be the same thing." If I sought counsel, each one would make their side the

most favorable, for I realized that I was a poor judge of such matters, owing to my ignorance of the Bible. I was in a dilemma. What was I to do? How was I to settle so important a question? Blessed be those dilemmas that cause us to turn to God for guidance—the infallible and unmistakable Guide. With no mind but to know His mind, and no will but to obey His will, I went in earnest prayer to Him, the God of all light and the Father of all good, and asked to be directed in the matter. It was a simple prayer, containing a simple proposition: “Heavenly Father, I want to ever obey Thee; but I am ignorant and don’t know which is Thy church. I pray Thee to let me know, by turning my affections more directly to one than the others, which one I should join.” The joy of my new life was still swelling my bosom with praise to Him who died to save me. My faith was simple and child-like, and I felt as sure that I would receive some impression in the matter as I would have received bread had I asked my earthly father for a piece of bread when he had an abundance at his disposal. “Did the answer come?” I had as soon believe He had never answered a single one of the ten thousand that I have offered since, as to doubt his answer to this first prayer ever offered through the name of an Intercessor. “But was the impression directing you towards the Baptists from God?” Again, I would as soon doubt there being a God who has said: “If *any* man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally and up-

braideth not," as to doubt these impressions being from above. I soon afterwards presented myself to a Missionary Baptist church, and was received as a candidate for the ordinance of baptism. Thus through prayer I was led to join the Baptists, and since that time I have been overwhelmingly convinced by history and the Bible that I am in the church organized by the Savior, the great Head of the church, in Matt. 16:13.

The history of my denomination is the only history of religious denominations that can be traced back to Christ and the apostles; while we alone preach and practice the New Testament in its entirety, all other denominations departing from it in several important particulars, while we are admonished to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and to keep the ordinances as they were delivered unto us, being reminded that the time would come when they would not endure sound doctrine, and that false teachers have gone out in the world who would deceive the elect if it were possible. The Devil has always had his missionaries as well as Christ.

Then is the Baptist church the only church of Christ? Certainly. Are all the rest of the professing Christian world either hypocrites or deluded souls on their way to hell? Oh! no; certainly not. There are many truly converted and pious men and women in these religious societies. It is not necessary to be a Christian to be a

member of the church; in fact, you should be a Christian before you are fit to unite with the church.

How do you account for so many professed Christians living out of the church? There are six answers to this question, one of which will fit every case on earth to-day. As you read the catalogue you may drive down a peg at the place that fits your case.

First—There are many people who make a profession of religion that know nothing of its power. Some of them are honestly deluded, while others are out and out hypocrites. When the roll is called of these two classes and they march out in solid columns before God and His saints, it will be an army outnumbering by far the army that pursued the Israelites and were overwhelmed in the billows of the Red Sea, or the hosts of the Philistines that defied the army of God at Shochoh, and were sheared of their glory by the little shepherd boy.

Second—Prejudice is a most potent power to shut our eyes to earthly as well as eternal things. It is the false face to many of the ugly errors embraced by the human family. “What we ardently wish, we earnestly believe; and disappointed still, are still deceived.” But very few, if any of us, really understand to what extent prejudice leads us in nearly all matters where sound judgment and deliberation are necessary. There is no other possible solution to the broad differences that are so manifest between families, communities and nations. Children, without any special inquiry, accept the teaching of their

parents. At a revival meeting, where a number are converted, you can safely judge beforehand to what denomination the most of them will attach themselves, if you know the faith of their parents. Prejudice makes our spectacles concave in looking at the good side of our position and convex in seeing the errors therein.

How very strange it is that before the great God and his everlasting kingdom we should build up and cherish views of our own, independent of Him; when before the voice of His thunder the earth trembles and the mountains are moved out of their places. Happy for us if this is not our shame when arraigned before His judgment bar!

Third—And perhaps the shame of the greatest multitude is, ignorance. Ignorance of God's word. How very few, comparatively speaking, ever take the time and care to look into the teaching of their denomination, and then compare it with the teaching of the New Testament. They take it for granted that since smart men have long since lived and died in the same faith, that an investigation would either confirm their faith or cloud the matter and confuse the mind. Let me assure you that this is a great mistake. "Things are not always what they seem." Smart(?) men are often like a big sponge—very small when you squeeze them a little. To confirm this you only need to experiment for yourself; while on the other hand, the Savior has said: "If *any* man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine," and Paul

adds that doctrine is profitable for the creature of God.

Glorious will be that day when Christians wake up to the importance of reading and thinking for themselves; when they call in the loan of their ears, eyes and judgment, and go back to Apostolic custom: To search the Scriptures to see if those things they teach and exhort are true.

Fourth—No doubt many have long since seen their error, but are ashamed to acknowledge their mistake. Feeling that their salvation does not depend upon it, they prefer to continue in the old “rut” to the acknowledgment of their mistake. To all such I repeat: “He that knoweth to do right and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” One may be excusable for embracing an error, but can never be justified before God and good men for knowingly continuing therein. All men but dead men make mistakes, and we never get too old for it to be respectable and honorable to correct them. If, through mistake, we have said the “Horse is eighteen feet high,” we should, on reflection, be willing to make a two-thirds acknowledgment of our mistake. Yet we have much reason to believe that many are making this very mistake. The testimony of the hundreds who long realized their mistake before they acknowledge it goes to prove that many die with those convictions in their heart.

Fifth—We often hear Christians, who admit their inconsistency, say it doesn’t make any difference about

these things; that it is not the way we do these things, but the motive that prompts us. But we should remember that the right motive will impel us to do a thing the way that God directs. Neither can we imagine such a thing as Christ ever saying an unimportant thing or enjoining a non-essential upon one of his followers. No indeed! His brief life was too busy; too much concerned about God's will and heaven's mission to enjoin an obligation upon his disciples that was not of the supremest importance. It may require denial, but he has declared that if we will not deny ourselves for Him we are not worthy of Him. So important it is that we obey Him. He has made it a test of our love: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

Let every Christian, who claims to be a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, blush for shame at the thought of substituting some other way than the one so plainly and so beautifully outlined by Him. "Keep the ordinances as I have delivered them unto you" is as binding on you as the ones to whom it was uttered.

Sixth—And last assignable cause behind which others are hiding their Savior, is friendship. If there is a one of the six that we pity more than blame, it is this one. No one places a higher estimate upon friendship than we, unless there are those who place their friends before their Savior, and this we fear some do. The tie that binds our hearts to Him is so sacred that He has told us that, unless we are willing to forsake father and mother,

sister and brother, lands and possessions for Him, we are not worthy of Him; and as we are told that all Scripture is profitable, we must conclude this passage to be also. Were there no such examples, doubtless the words would never have found a place in Holy Writ.

In these six causes we have outlined the principles that keep us, as Christians of our common Lord, from seeing and feeling alike concerning His work and kingdom. Remove these six objections and we give it as our most deliberate conviction that the Baptists' ranks would swell until it would absorb every true Christian on earth to-day; while the various religious orders of earth would sing the funeral dirge to the principles that distinguish them from us, and we all alike rejoice at the answer to our Savior's prayer, "That we may all be one."

In each of these reasons we have found the fortress of some of God's people. Just which one, or perhaps, more than one, that fits you, reader, you must be the judge. To deny my position is not to refute it. It behooves each one to prayerfully test themselves by the rules laid down, and then both writer and reader must say: "To his own master he standeth or falleth."



## HISTORICAL SERMON

PREACHED AT SHILOH BAPTIST CHURCH, AUGUST 18,  
1894, AND ORDERED PUBLISHED BY THE CHURCH.

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TEXT—Matt. 16:18. *Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

I wish to preface this series of sermons with these statements:

1st. I have but two motives in view in preaching these sermons: The glory of God and the good of my hearers. I hope this statement covers the ground. If you believe it, I need not add further testimony. If you do not, you would not believe more.

I have prepared them with a vivid consciousness of a judgment bar, before which every man's work shall be tested, and with a burning remembrance of the last chapter of this blessed Bible, which says if any man adds to the things written herein, God will add to him the plagues written herein.

I know I shall call down the censure of many upon my unworthy head, and the additional applause of but few. I do not enjoy criticism more than other men, and all know that it is an innate principle of the human heart to love praise and shrink from censure, but by the

grace of God I have reached the point that I esteem the approbation of God above the applause of man.

I further wish to say (and I hope you will bear this in mind throughout these services) that I do not call in question the piety and Christianity of any denomination, but believe in them all there are many devout Christians. I do not *unchristian*, but *unchurch* them.

I love every true lover of Jesus, and I believe I love them more than do those who cry down every man and everything that crosses their path. If you are a child of God you are my brother in Christ, and I love you now, and will love you in heaven; but the error you have embraced, I do not now love and don't believe I will love it in heaven.

I do not hope to win all my hearers to my position, for I fully understand that under such circumstances there are, first, those who will not hear at all; secondly, there are some so blinded by preconceived notions of their own that they will not give an honest, candid hearing; and thirdly, there are still others, who, even if convinced, would not accept the truth. But I do believe there are yet others who have honestly embraced error and are ever open to conviction, and when shown by God's precious word they are in error, will joyfully embrace the truth.

I am to prove, or attempt to prove, that the Missionary Baptist church is the Church of Christ. There are two means of proof, viz: by a succession of churches from Christ down to the present time, and by the doc-

trine taught by the church compared with the teachings of the New Testament.

In this sermon I shall attempt to prove this by a succession of churches. And to do this we have to lay aside the Bible and take up history (both profane and ecclesiastical). I have simply taken a text to show the agreement of history with the scripture, and only wish to offer this very brief exegesis of my text. Let me read it again: "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." My exegesis is this: That Christ, while upon earth, organized his own church; that he organized it upon the faith of faithful followers whom he had taught the sublime principles of his kingdom, and that this church should never be extinct, but should exist until his return to earth again. I wish further to state that the continued existence of mere religious denominations would not suffice to make this declaration true, that the gates of hell should not prevail against it, or in other words, that it should never die out; but to make the statement true, there must ever exist somewhere upon this planet a church that both preaches and practices the doctrine and ordinances once delivered to the saints, with *nothing* taken from or added to. Now can this be proven by history? I think so. I believe I can trace by history this church (Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church) to the church organized by the Savior, and all I now ask of you, my brethren and friends, is that you unbolt the door of

your heart and give me (your friend and brother) a candid, prayerful hearing. There are two ways by which we might follow up the channel of investigation: Either by going back to the fountain-head and coming down the stream, or commencing at the mouth and seeking the source. And as the latter seems to be the more natural and interesting way, I have fallen upon this method. The Church of Christ has been persecuted, but never overthrown; cast down, but not destroyed. It was built upon a rock against which neither the powers of darkness nor the seduction of Satan could prevail. Poor, persecuted, and despised, still the true friends of the Redeemer's cause maintained the great truths of our holy religion, unterrified by opposition and unseduced by corruption. And the honor of being the true witnesses for the truth and the word of God, when the civilized nations of the earth had bowed down in blind and servile obedience to the authority of the Roman Pontiff, in sustaining in undiminished radiance and splendor the altar-fires of our holy religion during the long and dreary darkness of the world's midnight, belongs to the Baptists. This is confessed by their enemies.

The heroic examples of our ancient brethren and sisters, who sealed their testimony with their blood, by showing that they suffered the loss of all earthly things for the same principles that distinguish us as a denomination should stimulate us to greater zeal and activity.

In other words, the church of God has been handed down to us at the cost of the lives of millions of our brethren and sisters who loved the church of Christ more than life itself, and, like righteous Abel, they being dead, yet speak to us in trumpet tones to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

But perhaps with those less versed in history and with our views, that it would be well to say a word about the name (Baptist) that we now wear. No Baptist historian (as all well-informed people know) claims that our denomination has always been designated by the name that now denominates us from all other religious creeds. This name was given us by our enemies owing to our views of baptism, but since the first administrator of this ordinance was called by inspiration, the *Baptist*, and since we administer the ordinance just as he did, we have no objection to the name, but it is not the succession of a name that we claim, but of *Faith* and *Practice*. We have gone by different names, as will be proven further on.

Where did the Baptists come from? This is an age of inquiry and tireless research. To the researches of an imperative curiosity the rocks have been unfolding divine truths, and the leaves that fell before the flood have been made to speak. Not a crumbling monument nor a buried city, or perished people of the dead past, but has been reproduced on the canvas of living history. Naught escapes the sleepless eye.

Now there is in our midst a class of people numbered by hundreds of thousands—found, indeed, wherever soul-freedom and the Gospel are—a people marked and peculiar, whose principles and influences have told, and must tell on the character of man and destiny of society: This people are called Baptists. Their distinguishing peculiarities are:

1. An uncompromising avowal and advocacy of soul-liberty, enlightened and guided and governed by the Eternal King.

2. They recognize Jesus Christ alone as their founder and head.

3. The Bible alone is their rule of faith and practice.

4. They perpetuate the Bible order of the Commandments—repentance, faith, baptism and the Lord's supper.

5. Baptists immerse, or bury with Christ in baptism only those who profess to have repented and believed to the saving of their soul.

6. Baptists observe the Lord's supper at His table in His kingdom.

7. Baptists, though the oldest of all religious denominations, have never persecuted others, but have themselves often been severely and painfully persecuted and everywhere spoken against. The Pope of Rome has said: "Of all the heretics in the world, the Baptists are the worst." Their watchword has ever been: "To

the law and to the testimony." This is the prominent peculiarities of the people of whom we speak.

Now this people, so well known among us, so peculiar and so rapidly growing in favor among thinking people, originated somewhere; some spot noted their beginning; some period in the march of human events witnessed their birth. Can the place of their nativity be found? Can the birthday of their origin be traced? Is the energy of human research to be baffled and defeated? With all its triumphs to pause breathless here? No, no!

The question can and must be answered, or history is fraught with deception—is blind and dumb. Let its notes resound through the misty ages, and it shall forever be known—where did the Baptists come from?

In vain do we seek among the authoritative records of the past for one kind word concerning them. Crushed beneath a powerful and tyrannical hierarchy, few, feeble and what the world called unlearned, yet lifting up their voice in defiant tones above the storms of execration and violence, protesting in the name of truth and freedom against the universal domination of a State Church and a proud, tyrannical clergy; sounding out through the gates of filthy prisons the joyous notes of redeeming love and melting the hearts of those that mockery attracted to the spot; scattered, defenseless, without State patronage or the prestige of noble names or great leaders; with no earthly head or strong central government to give directions to their aims; with the word of God

their only guide; yet rising in the strength of God above the crested waves, battling with the storm steadily, unwaveringly, onward, upward until now, in the eloquent words of Chalmers, "Let it never be forgotten of the Baptists that they form the denomination of Fuller, and Cary, and Ryland, and Hall, and Foster—that they originated one of all missionary enterprises; that they have enriched the Christian literature of our country with an authorship of the most exalted piety, as well as the first talent, and the first eloquence; that they have waged a noble war with the hydra of anti-nomianism; that perhaps there is not a more intellectual community of ministers, or who have, to their number, put forth a greater amount of mental power and mental activity in the defense and illustration of our common faith, and what is still better than all the triumphs of genius and understanding, who by zeal and fidelity, and pastoral labor among the congregations which they have reared, have done more to swell the list of genuine discipleship in all the walks of private society, and thus to uphold and extend the living Christianity of our nation." Such are the people whose origin we can surely trace.

In 1775 the Baptists first appeared in the mighty West. It was a momentous period in the world's history. The storms of Revolution were spreading over the colonies, bringing gloom and misery. Nowhere did the contest rage more fearfully than in Virginia, and nowhere did the opponents manifest truer patriotism than the Vir-



ginia colonies. It was the battle of truth, freedom and national life, and conspicuous in this conflict was not only the Baptist laity, but the clergy also. The midnight gloom was at last succeeded by the dawn of freedom. The principles which triumphed in the Revolution were the elements of her existence, and the men who had suffered most from oppression and had lifted up their voices for freedom from the jails of Virginia were among the first settlers of the Valley of the Mississippi. Lewis Craig had been followed by his devoted church to the gates of Fredericksburg jail. He was followed by the same church through the Cumberland Gap to plant the Gospel amid the tangled wilderness of the dark and bloody battle ground. The principles which actuated him, and have ever governed the Baptists, had been working silently, but effectually, for more than a hundred years in Virginia. Of the many and cruel scenes of persecution heaped upon the Baptists in this State I will here only notice one. It was the trial of Lewis and Joseph Craig and Aaron Bledsoe. They had been indicted for preaching the Gospel of salvation to dying men and women in the colony of Virginia. The clerk of the court was reading the indictment, when he pronounced with emphasis the crime: "For preaching the Gospel of the Son of God in the colony of Virginia." Just at this moment a plainly dressed man rode up to the court house, got down from his horse, entered the court room and took a seat within the bar. He was known to the

court and lawyers, but a stranger to the mass of spectators. This was the man whose name is familiar to every school boy and girl who have studied the history of our struggles for independence; this was the man whose name will be handed down to posterity as long as a spark of patriotism and gratitude remains in the human breast. This was Patrick Henry, who, on hearing of this unjust prosecution, had rode some fifty miles or more from his home in Hanover to volunteer his services in their defense. He listened with bated breath to the further reading of the indictment, and soon heard the accusation, "For preaching the Gospel of the Son of God." When the reading was finished and the prosecuting attorney had submitted a few remarks, Mr. Henry arose, reached out his hand for the indictment, and addressed the court, thus: "May it please Your Worships, I think I heard read by the prosecutor as I entered this house the paper I now hold in my hand. If I have rightly understood, the King's attorney of this colony has framed an indictment for the purpose of arraigning, and punishing by imprisonment, three inoffensive persons before the bar of this court, for a crime of great magnitude—as disturbers of the peace. May it please the court, what did I hear read? Did I hear it distinctly, or was it a mistake of my own? Did I hear an expression as if a crime, that these men, whom your worships are about to try for a misdemeanor, are charged with—

what?" And continuing in a low, solemn tone, "For preaching the Gospel of the Son of God."

Pausing here amid profound silence and anxious expectation, he slowly waved the paper around his head three times, and lifting his hands and eyes to heaven, he exclaimed: "*Great God!*"

I should, but for want of time, give here his speech in full, but can only add a few phrases. He exclaims with peculiar emotion: "Heaven decreed that man should be free—free to worship God according to the Bible." "This paper says for preaching the Gospel of the Son of God." "*Great God!*" "For preaching the Gospel of the Savior to Adam's fallen race."

His earnest soul and eloquent words burnt themselves into the very hearts of the persecutors, and when he had ended his speech, the prosecuting attorney, who seemed almost unconscious of his situation, stood like a monument, with his features pallid and ghastly, while the judge, in a tremulous voice, declaimed: "Sheriff, discharge those men." A century anterior to this a statute was enacted in the colonial legislature of Virginia, which reads thus: "Whereas, Sundry and divers persons, out of adverseness to the established religion, or out of new-fangled conceits of their own heretical inventions, refuse to have their children baptized, Be it enacted. That whosoever shall thus refuse when he might carry his child to a lawful minister within the country,

shall be fined two thousand pounds of tobacco, half to the informer and half to the parish."

The parties against whom this legislation thunder was hurled in the name of King Charles II. were Baptists. "Here, then," says Mr. Ford, in the interior of Virginia, at the time when Rhode Island was organizing, and with no intercourse with that distant little colony, "we find Christian immersionists — Baptists. Where did they come from?"

One year previous, in the colony of Massachusetts, "a poor man by the name of Painter," as we are informed by Mr. Hubbard, "was suddenly turned Anabaptist (this is a name that characterized our denomination for a considerable period of time), and having a child born, would not suffer his wife to carry the child to be baptized. He was reported to the court and demanded to have the child baptized. He refused to submit to it, arguing that infant baptism was unwarranted by Scripture, and hence an anti-Christian ordinance, for which he was tied up and whipped." About this time, says Governor Winthrop, that the Anabaptists increased and spread in Massachusetts, and this fearful increase, which could not be checked by argument nor abuse and insult, led to the following act for their suppression: "For as much as experience hath plentifully and often proved that the Anabaptists have been the infectors of persons in the main matters of religion, and hold that the baptism of infants is unlawful; and, whereas, divers

of this kind have, *since our coming* into New England, appeared among ourselves, and if they should be connived at by us, are likely to be increased among us, it is ordered and agreed, that if any person or persons within this jurisdiction shall openly condemn or oppose the baptizing of infants, or depart from the congregation at the ministration of the ordinance, every such person or persons shall be subject to banishment." This statute clearly settles the fact beyond the possibility of a doubt that from the first settlement (or as the statute reads), "Since our coming into New England have appeared among ourselves Anabaptists."

Five years anterior to the enactment of the above law, in 1638, Hansard Knollys, a name enshrined in the temple of soul-liberty, gathered together a Baptist church, and John Smith, John Spur and four others were arrested in 1639 for attempting to organize a church at Weymouth, fourteen miles south of Boston. I mention this fact as it antedates the day of Roger Williams, who has been claimed by some to be the founder of the first Baptist church of America. Who then is the founder of the first Baptist Church of America? When and where was it founded, and what became of it? The oldest Baptist church in America (according to abundance of history), is the one organized and now existing at Newport, R. I., and was organized by Dr. John Clarke. I here submit in full the epitaph of this

faithful man of God. We read upon the marble that marks his peaceful rest the following inscription:

“To the memory of Dr. John Clarke, one of the original purchasers and proprietors of this island, and one of the founders of the first Baptist church in Newport, its first and munificent benefactor. He was a native of Bedfordshire, England, and a practitioner of physic in London. He, with his associates, came to this island from Massachusetts in March, 1638, and on the 24th of the same month obtained a deed thereof from the Indians. He shortly after gathered the church aforesaid and became its pastor. In 1651 he, with Roger Williams, was sent to England by the people of Rhode Island colony to negotiate the business of the colony with the British ministry. Mr. Clarke was instrumental in obtaining the charter of 1663 from King Charles II., which secured to the people of the State free and full enjoyment of judgment and conscience in matters of religion. He remained in England to watch over the interest of the colony until 1664, and then returned to Newport and resumed pastoral care of his church. Mr. Clarke and Mr. Williams, two fathers of the colony, strenuously and fearlessly maintained that none but Jesus Christ had authority over the affairs of conscience. He died April 20, 1676, in the 66th year of his age, and is here interred.”

Here is history written upon marble, and if we had no other testimony, this is sufficient to forever set aside

all pretense of Roger Williams being the founder of the first Baptist church of America. Monuments rise here and there all along the line to bear witness of the truth of the past, to light up the pathway of God's present faithful, and to inspire us to greater sacrifices for Him who was rich, but for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich!

"Eighteen years after the landing of the Mayflower," says Mr. Ford in his brief history, "when every man in the colony was English born, and before Roger Williams was baptized, a church of Baptists was formed in America." Where did they come from?

Let us trace the connecting link across the Atlantic—from New England to Old England.

Hansard Knollys, of whom I have before spoken, was born in Lincoln, England, in 1598; graduated with distinguishing honors at Cambridge University. Having joined the Baptists, he became the object of Episcopal hate. Hearing of the revolution which brought Charles I. to the block in 1648, he returned to England. Says Crosby: "A few years after his return from America we find Mr. Knollys discharging his public ministry to a congregation of his own gathering in Great St. Helens, London, where the people flocked in crowds to hear him, and he generally had a thousand auditors. In 1660 Mr. Knollys, with many other innocent persons, was dragged from his dwelling house and committed to Newgate, where he was kept in close cus-

tody for eighteen weeks, until released by an act of grace upon the King's coronation. During his absence in Holland and Germany his property was confiscated to the crown, and when the law did not favor the monarch's pretensions, a party of soldiers was dispatched to take forcible possession of Mr. Knollys' premises, which had cost him upwards of 700 pounds."

After suffering at different times nine years imprisonment, besides fines and banishment, he died at the ripe and fruitful old age of ninety-three. Just as death was about to claim this weather-beaten, time-worn and soul-burdened soldier of Jesus Christ, he wrote: "I confess that many of the Lord's ministers have excelled me, with whom He has not taken so much pains as He hath with me. I am an unprofitable servant; but, by the grace of God, I am what I am."

The brief mention of Hansard Knollys, his visit to America and return to England, together with the sacrifices and privations—amid which he stood like a god, unawed and unterrified beneath the thunder storm—give to him a character simple, yet sublime. But before this, the age in which he lived, will ever be memorable to Baptists. It was the age of Tombs, of Collier, of Kiffin and of Bunyan—a day of sore trials yet brilliant triumphs.

Let us hear what the great historian, Macauley, speaking of these men, says:

"From the depth of despair the penitent passed to a



state of serene felicity. An irresistible impulse now urged him to impart to others the blessing which he himself possessed. He joined the Baptists and became a preacher and writer. He knew no language but the English, yet his rude oratory roused and melted his hearers, who listened without interest to the belabored discourses of great logicians and Hebraists.

“It may be doubted whether any English dissenter had suffered more severely under the penal laws than John Bunyan. Of the twenty-seven years which had elapsed since the Restoration, he had passed twelve of them in confinement. He still persisted in preaching, but that he might preach, he was under the necessity of disguising himself like a carter. He was often introduced into meetings through back doors, with a smock frock on his back and a whip in his hand. He was now at length free to pray and exhort in open day. His congregations rapidly increased; thousands hung upon his words, and at Bedford, where he resided and where he suffered twelve years’ imprisonment, money was plentifully contributed to build a meeting house for him. His influence was such among the people that the government would willingly have bestowed on him some municipal office. He felt assured that the proffered toleration was merely a bait intended to lure the Puritan party to destruction. One of the last acts of his virtuous life was to decline an interview to which he was invited by an agent of the government.

“Great as was the influence of Bunyan with the Baptists, that of William Kiffin was greater. He was the first man among them in station and wealth. He was the grandfather of the two Hewlings, those gallant youths who, of all the victims of the Bloody Assizes, had been the most generally lamented. For the sad fate of one of them, James was in a peculiar manner responsible. Jeffreys had respited the younger brother. The poor lad’s sister had been ushered by Churchill into the royal presence, and had begged for mercy, but the King’s heart had been obdurate. The misery of the whole family had been great, but Kiffin was most to be pitied. He was seventy years old when he was left desolate, the survivor of those who should have survived him. The heartless and venal sycophants of White Hall, judging by themselves, thought that the old man would be easily propitiated by an alderman’s gown, and by some compensation in money for the property which his grandson had forfeited.”

Passing from Kiffin to Thomas Collier we can only take time to quote a sentence from one of his enemies—Edwards: “This Collier is a great sectary in the west of England, a mechanical fellow, and a great emissary and a dipper, who goes about Surrey, Hampshire and those countries preaching and dipping.”

This was in 1660. Notwithstanding the constant and violent persecution, there were 217 Baptist churches in England, according to Mr. Ford’s history.

It was a dark yet glorious day for the Baptists, for the blackest clouds sent forth the brightest lightnings.

Charles I. was dethroned in 1648, and royalty, nobility, Episcopacy, and the whole tribe of dead formalities, like rotting leaves from the whole realm. But the Stuarts had returned, and with hatred and treason in their train, and with garments dipped and dyed in the innocent blood of a down-trodden and prostrate people. Episcopacy, the ever deadly foe to soul-freedom, was again enthroned and clad in robes of scarlet. But there were, thank God, those whom the power of the bishops could neither bend nor crush. Above the thunder, rose with fearless front, the forms of Bunyan, of Kiffin, and of thousands of others, whose names are only found in heaven's martyr roll. Baptists, whose devotion and fidelity to those principles, were like those principles—*deathless*.

From 1649 to 1659, the star of hope did not burn so brilliantly; still, amid this flickering twilight, most earnestly did the Baptists press on the thinking world their principles of soul-freedom. Says Carlyle: "A little band of Christian brothers, who had drawn the sword against a black, devouring world, they cried to God in their straits, in their extreme need, not to forsake the cause that was His. The light that now rose upon them (how could a human soul by any means get a better light?) To them it was as the shining of heaven's own splendor in the vast howling darkness." But we

must hasten from this point, though there are thrilling victories and cruel persecutions that cannot fail, when known, to awaken emotion and inspire greater devotion, to the true, eternal and fundamental principles of God's inspired word. But we must pass a little further up the stream. And so the question yet to be settled is: Where did the Baptists come from?

The Baptists of England were poor in this world's goods, owing to their continued persecution and imprisonment. A tract published in 1613, the title of which is, "A Plea for Liberty of Conscience, Presented to King James." An extract from which says: "Another reason why so many good people are now deceived is because that we that have most truth are persecuted and therefore most poor; whereby we are unable to write and print against the adversaries of truth." This document you remember is addressed to King James. When Bushner thus lifted his voice the ashes of Edward Wightman were still being borne about by the winds, for he was burned at the stake at Lighfield for being a Baptist. He was charged with affirming "That the baptism of infants is an abominable custom, and that Christianity is not wholly professed and preached in England, but only in part." For this Episcopacy condemned him to death. He was burned April 11, 1612. This was just one year after the publication of the King James version of the Bible. I here give in full the instruction of the King concerning this man:

“We command thee, that thou cause the said Edward Wightman, being in thy custody, to be committed to the fire in some public and open place, below the city aforesaid, for the cause aforesaid, before the people; and the same Edward Wightman, in the same fire, cause really to be burned, in the detestation of the same crime; and for the manifest example of other Christians, that they may not fall into the same crime. And this noways omit, under the peril that shall follow thereon. Witness, etc. James, Rex.”

I next pass from this date to 1589. Says Dr. Some, an Episcopal writer of that day: “There were several Anabaptist conventicles in London and other places.” This was during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, as the fires of Smithfield, which lit up the bloody reign of her sister Mary, were dying; and yet the slumbering flames were fed with the bodies of Baptists for the views they preached and practiced. Before I pass this period, you may drive down a peg, for here is the beginning of Episcopacy.

In the year 1549 a Protestant inquisition was established, and hundreds of Baptists were its victims; among whom I mention one, whose heroic example will ever awaken the sympathies of man. Joan Boucher, of Kent, was a woman of very rare education and refinement. The commission had been granted to the hishops to search out and apprehend heretical Baptists. Joan was selected as an illustrious victim. She was tried before

the Protestant bishops and condemned. The venerable archbishop, who framed many of the prayers still read in the Methodist and Episcopal churches, brought the warrant to Edward to sign. He hesitated, and even refused, but through the persuasion of this archbishop, he signed it with tears in his eyes. A year, within three days, transpired between her condemnation and her death. Every effort was made to get her to give up the truth, as she believed it and held it, but of no avail. At last, on the 2d day of May, 1550, she was bound to the stake in Smithfield, and died in fearless triumph. She was a member of the Baptist church at Canterbury, which church still exists until this present day. Her memory is deathless, and the crime of her murder stains with blackness and stamps *falsehood* upon the very front of Episcopacy. But now, my brethren and sisters, I must hurry you on up the stream of investigation.

There are many thrilling incidents that I should like to notice, but time positively forbids more than a mention of dates and facts. I have already borne you beyond all the modern denominations of the present day, and yet have not located the origin of the Baptists. Where, oh, where, did they come from? A simple and holy religion is the glorious embodiment of soul-freedom; suited to the wants of the human soul and immortal aspirations of mankind; meeting him in his besotted, depraved condition, and offering a helping hand; bringing to the wretched and distressed comfort and consola-

tion; coming in direct contact with the heart; showing poor, fallen man his helplessness and ruined condition; and at last breathing into his heart the sweet assurance of a bright beyond.

Mosheim, a Pedobaptist author says, in speaking of the Anabaptists, that "They are not entirely in error in claiming to be descendants from the Waldenses. Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, they lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe." Says Dr. Featly, who wrote against the Baptists in 1645: "This sect has baptized hundreds of men and women in rivulets and some arms of the Thames." Sir William Newbury, in his history of England, says: "These Wickliffites—these Baptists—were found scattered throughout England. They were as numerous as the sands of the sea." So, here we find Baptists in the fourteenth century. "History," says Dr. Ford, "is composed of innumerable biographies. We love to tread the path beaten out by human footsteps, and lit up by imperishable deeds. Men and their acts are the way-marks which make the road familiar." From the Baptists of England, who were scourged and driven into the wintry fields to die, we ascend a step higher. Let us travel back from where they came. We shall let Dr. Wall, in his very opposition to Baptists, tell; hear him: William of Newburg, who lived in England, says: "About thirty of them came out of Germany into England under Henry II, about 1170, and being examined concerning



their faith, denied holy baptism and the eucharist." Another writer explains more fully their views concerning baptism—that they denied salvation by baptism, but that salvation should precede baptism. Mosheim says, in speaking of the Baptists: "Nor are they entirely in error when they boast of their descent from the Waldenses, and other ancient sects."

The Baptists have ever been uncompromising in the views that characterize them as a denomination, and hence have often and repeatedly had to bear the reproach of being called selfish and narrow. But in this, we find comfort in the words of our blessed Savior: "Those who live Godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." And again: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give to you the Kingdom." Christianity aims at the entire subversion of everything antagonistic to its principles. Such was the mission of the Apostles. They accepted no compromise. They asked no quarter, and gave none in return. But were deaf to the word "retreat." This same unrelenting, untiring spirit characterized the Baptists during the dark age of which we now approach.

These "heretics," along the valleys of Piedmont and the Alps, were called Arnoldists. That Arnold was a Baptist, as well as Peter De Bruis, has been shown by statements of Pedobaptists. These men, as well as their followers, were Baptists. Where did they come from? We are now to seek light through the darkest



days of the world's history. During that period in which images appear, clothed in ecclesiastical pomp, the romantic images, that seem like the creation of fancy. Can we peer through this darkness and find the foot-prints of God's faithful ones? We now find a denomination of people called Paulicians. Of this people Mosheim, their bitter enemy, mentions sixteen objections of this people to the practice of Episcopacy, which objections I can not here take time to give, but which certainly correspond very strikingly with the views of the Baptist denomination of to-day.

Now let us cast a backward glance over the centuries we have passed. From the cruelties and persecutions in Virginia just preceding the revolution, we ascended the colonial period and found Baptists in the Old Dominion at the time that Knollys and Clarke and Holmes were planting the Gospel banner in the wilds of New England. From Virginia and Rhode Island we enter the jail of Bunyan. During the time of Luther and Calvin, we find Baptists in every part of Europe. In the lovely land of Italy, under the very shadow of the Vatican, we find Baptists, who were being condemned and burned by the Pope. From Italy to Constantinople, from Constantinople to America and Syria, we have followed the line of unbroken succession. From here we take up the channel of investigation, and ere we proceed far, we are up among the Paulician Baptists in the mountains of Armenia, amid those sublime heights from

whence Father Noah and his family looked down on a wicked world as they watched the receding of the waters of the terrible deluge. What a gloomy sight the world presented in the seventh century, yet in the far west, where the grand old Alps rise with towering heights, in the Pyrenees, and still farther west, among the white cliffs, are found a common faith, a people known as Anabaptists.

We have seen that the Paulicians were Baptists; that they arose in the early period of the Christian church, and that their opposition to the dominant party, whose aims were to blend Jewish rites with the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel; and we find that Sylvanus learned the truth that he afterwards taught with great earnestness and success, from a Syrian, who was returning from captivity among the Saracens. This was in the year six hundred and fifty-seven.

Now, it is a fact, that about the very time that Sylvanus received the copy of the Scriptures from the returning Syrian, Pope Gregory the First, issued Papal Mandates condemning and urging the persecution of certain *heretics*, whom he called montences, and other Anabaptists. He describes them as advocates of a Scriptural church, composed of regenerated persons only, and as rebaptizers of those they received from other societies. They are spoken of as a multitude, and as the descendants of the Donastists.

This now brings us to the sixth century, and I can

now only mention the names by which we were known during the remaining six centuries, not that the history is lacking, but the time. During the sixth century we were known by the name Donatists. In the fifth and fourth Nudians. During the third century Novations. In the second century Tertullianists. Perhaps the question arises in some mind along this last part of my statement: "How do you make that these people of whom you have spoken were Baptists?" I have but one way of judging. I judge them just like I did the Baptists of Virginia in colonial times—by their doctrine.

But before I close I will place one other proposition under my last statements, and I dare any man who cares anything for his reputation as a man of honor, and as a scholar, to deny one syllable of it.

It is the result of the investigations of two learned men who were appointed by the King of Holland to prepare a history of the Dutch Reformed Church. One was Ypeij, Professor of Theology at the University of Groninger, and the other was Rev. I. J. Dermont, Chaplain of the King. Both learned Pedobaptists of the Dutch church. In their history they honestly and truthfully draw the line of distinction between the munster Anabaptists and the true Baptists. They say: "We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in latter times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses; and who have long, in the history of the church, received the honor of that origin. On

this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the days of the Apostles, and as a Christian society which has preserved *pure* the doctrines of the Gospel through all the ages.

“The perfectly correct external and internal economy of the Baptist denomination tends to confirm the truth, disputed by the Romish church, that the reformation brought about in the sixteenth century was in the highest degree necessary, and at the same time goes to refute the erroneous notion of the Catholics that their communion is the most ancient.”

Here are two scholarly men, both Pedobaptists, who date the origin of the Baptists from Apostolic days, and admit that they, and they only, have kept the ordinances pure. They further state that the Baptists are older than the “mother” of all the modern denominations. Where is the Baptist that claims more than these men cheerfully admit?

And now we have briefly, yet certainly, pushed on up the stream of eighteen hundred years, and at every period of this research found those who preached and practiced the ordinances just as the Baptists of to-day do. Now, I have just one other fact to prove, and I will have fully settled the question, both as to a succession of churches and of the Missionary Baptist Church being the Church of Christ. That is, that the churches of the first century agree with the churches of the eighteenth

century. Who are to be our witnesses? Shall Baptist historians be our standard of proof? No! I shall let Presbyterians and Episcopalians speak. Curcellus says: "The baptism of infants, in the first two centuries after Christ, was altogether unknown, but in the third and fourth was allowed by some few." I might give testimony upon testimony as to infant baptism, but I submit one other testimony, and that from the greatest ecclesiastical historian that ever lived, Neander. He says: "Baptism was at first administered only to adults, as men were accustomed to think baptism and faith strictly connected," etc.

Is there any possibility of denying this testimony? And it thus far agrees with the Baptists of to-day. We now pause to ask another question: What mode did the churches during this century practice? And again I here introduce the testimony of our enemies. Neander's *History of the Christian Religion* says: "Baptism was originally administered only by immersion, and many of the companions of St. Paul allude to it as a symbol of death, of being buried with Christ; the coming forth from the water is a symbol of the resurrection of Christ," etc.

Richard Baxter (Presbyterian and author of the "Rest of the Saints") says: "It is commonly confessed by us to the Anabaptists, as our commentators declare, that in the Apostles' time the baptized were dipped." But I will not stop further on this point. I may preach

on this later on during this series of sermons. Need we add more to prove that the churches of the first and second centuries were Baptist churches? Can, in the name of all reason and common sense, a church differing from Apostolic practice be the Church of Christ, when God's word says: "Keep the ordinances as I have delivered them unto you?"

Thank God! history proves that the declaration of our text is true, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Eighteen hundred years confirms the statement.

Here, then, is our ancestry, of whom we are proud; the origin of our denomination, for which we are grateful. While the multitudes were gathering on the banks of the beautiful Jordan to hear and learn of this new star of Bethlehem, of the good news of "Peace on earth and good will to man," "Behold the land of God!" exclaimed the enraptured herald of the Kingdom, and then, in those waters, consecrated by a thousand associations, Jesus was baptized, while the parting heavens spoke in approving terms: "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."

## THE EXCELLENCE OF THE GOSPEL.

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TEXT—“*For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*”—ROM. 1:16.

No man has a just place in the ministry that does not regard his office as the highest one on earth; that does not prefer it to any other position; and does not love it dearer than life itself. He must love it because it is conferred on him by heaven, and has in it the good of his fellowman and the glory of God.

Men bestow offices that pertain to this world, but the preacher's office pertains to eternity. He must love his office because he loves humanity, and has the heaven-appointed remedy for their redemption—the power of God unto Salvation.

With these incentives as a living inspiration, not only is he not ashamed of his mission, but it is the chief joy and delight of his heart. Though he may have entered upon it very reluctantly and with great fear and trem-

bling, yet, as he has been made to realize that God has placed His seal upon his apostleship, he finds something in his heart that gives rise to the expression: "I thank God that He counted me worthy, putting me in the ministry." "That He has made me a preacher of righteousness, a herald of the cross of Christ."

He has the remedy, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, that will open deaf ears, give sight to blind eyes, and feeling to stony hearts. He has a message of transforming power—a message that will lift men out of the mire and clay of sin and transplant them on the Eternal Rock of ages; that will take them out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the people of God.

It is the power of God, not of man. All other power is subordinate. The strongest feel its force and yield to its influences. It is the power that created heaven and earth; that divided the land and water; and that speaks and man yields up his life.

It is the power unto salvation; power that can bring sinful man back to God and make peace between the offended and the offender. Like Jacob's ladder, it connects heaven and earth, and makes a way by which earth can climb to heaven.

It is not circumscribed power that is wasted and weakened by dissemination. It is, "to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."



This, in brief, is the potency of the gospel that is to be preached throughout the world. It is the hope and only hope, brethren, of bringing the world to Jesus. No tricks of elocution; no clap-traps of human invention; or no amount of modern attractions can possibly save one single dead sinner. We may gladly welcome any and everything that conduces to a genuine spirituality and increases our zeal, but we can never dispense with the preaching of the gospel as the sole reliance of salvation. It has pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. The Jews require signs and the Greeks wisdom, but Paul preached Christ crucified.

If any one needs more to clear them up on this point—for, brethren, I very much desire that we all understand this clearly—let me refer you to a case cited by our Lord. It occurs in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. They had both died. Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom, and Dives was in hell. In his tortured condition he lifted up his eyes and looked afar off and saw Abraham, and Lazarus in his bosom. He first requested that Lazarus be sent to bring him some water, and upon being informed that there was an impassable gulf between them, and that he had really thrust himself into his awful doom, he next asks that he be sent back to this world, where he had five brethren, that he might tell them what he had seen, so that they would not come to the same place. Whereupon Abraham re-

mind him that his brothers had Moses and the prophets, which would faithfully and truly warn them of such an end; but he still insisted that Lazarus be sent, claiming that if one would go from the dead they would be persuaded. But here Abraham, who had no doubt shared his feelings concerning his kinsmen, assured him if they rejected the testimony they had—the gospel—they would in some way break the force of the testimony from the dead. So it was *then*, and so it is *now*. We never heard of any great influence from the resurrection of the other Lazarus, and so I believe to-day, that those who are not reached by the gospel can never be reached by any other means.

But let me say, while our weapons of warfare are not carnal, they are sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. While our only equipment is the gospel, it is all we need.

In order that we all may, to-day if possible, more fully appreciate the excellence of the gospel, let us notice its progress of eighteen centuries.

Had not the Propagator of this gospel been divine He would have exhibited a degree of self-importance and blinded conceit that has no parallel in the history of men, when he commissioned his few disciples to publish his name over the entire earth. Brethren, I am amazed and filled with joy when I contemplate the

progress the gospel has made and the success that it has achieved! Surely, those who doubt its authenticity have never compared its success with its hindrances. Napoleon, the greatest of military chieftains, with his splendid armies, had France crouched at his feet begging for quarter, but afterwards we find him a chained prisoner at St. Helena, with his armies scattered and his glory shorn like Sampson of his locks. And to-day the school boy admires his power, but deplores his faults. But it is not so of Jesus of Nazareth and his doctrine. With but few friends, and less avowed followers, with an obstinate and tyrannical government persecuting even to the extent of tricks and fraud, His influence has swept over the world and gladdened the hearts of earth's scattered inhabitants. And to-day faith in Him and zeal for His cause can see this influence traveling, very soon, every thoroughfare of earth, until the hills and the valleys shall catch the sound and re-echo the song of the angels: "Glory to God on the highest; on earth peace and good will to man."

To-day, while we, as an association and messengers from the churches, have come here to advise with each other for the furtherance of His cause and to engage in His strength to promulgate His name over the world, ten thousand church spires point the passer-by to the everlasting hills from whence cometh His help and bespeak of His gathering influence in the world. To-day

more talented men and women than ever before in the history of the world are giving their lives to the great work, and to-day the outlook is brighter than ever before that His second return to earth is rapidly approaching.

Where else in the annals of time do we find another character whose influence over the world increases as the centuries go by? Many truly great men have lived before and since His day, men whose praises were sung by greater multitudes, but with the waste and weight of time they have been forgotten. As other stars appear, we are inclined to forget those that gave light to our ancestry. But this case is peculiar and different from all others. Empires have risen, flourished and decayed, but this Man that had not where to lay His head is now pillowed upon the bosom of every century, every tribe and every class.

Then, brother preachers, we have a business, a great business, an imperative business. These things have not come to us by chance, but by sacrifice and fidelity to a cause that was more precious than life. The world needs to know, and must know, more of Jesus and His doctrine. We are the God-appointed teachers, and must teach it. We should determine with the great apostle to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified; with Him feel that, "I am debtor both, to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach

the gospel to you that are in Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Our business is to preach Christ; preach him as Prophet, Priest and King. These are three important relations sustained by Christ to His people. They are necessary to be understood in order to enjoy the highest degree of trust in Him. To somewhat particularize:

1. The word prophet means one who foretells future events, and also one who teaches. It is in this latter sense more particularly that Christ is our Prophet. And on this line too much can not easily be said. This is a restless age of the world, as well as a wicked age. Bad men are imposing themselves upon the people and teaching doctrines of men. Teachers they are of itching ears, and the restless spirit of the age will embrace new things unless rooted and grounded in eternal things. When our Prophet speaks let all other mouths be stopped. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." He is the only unerring teacher, and, "To this end," said He, "was I born, and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth."

2. He is our Priest. In the transgression man became a condemned sinner, and all the tears, penance and righteousness in the world had not been sufficient

to take away one sin, or to restore one sinner to the lost favor of God. It devolved alone upon Him, of whom it is said, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec, to bring in everlasting righteousness and make a full end of sin." "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Wherefore, He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

3. He sustains the office of King. In the fall, man arrayed against himself a host of inveterate enemies to oppose his return to God, and no created arm could have worked his deliverance. "But thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." In the fall the law reared its adamantine walls to heaven and shot forth flames of consuming wrath upon every guilty son of Adam's race. The Son of God—the Prince of Peace!—hath broken this power and redeemed us from under the curse of the law. "The devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour;" but "the God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." Yes, brethren, Christ must reign as Prophet, Priest and King until all things are put under his feet, for "He is the head over all things to the church."

Glorious mission is his whose business it is to tell these things to his fellow man. No wonder that Paul

thanked God for putting him in the ministry! No wonder men have rejoiced to suffer persecution for the sake of this Gospel!

Another truth of which I wish to remind you again, is, that in this work we are not left to ourselves. Well might an earthen vessel exclaim: "Who is sufficient for these things!" But again the humble preacher can exclaim: "But thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Let us, when we read the great commission that says, *go*, also read the coupled promise: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." What an incentive to a preacher! With him all the time; with him everywhere; under all conditions of life, even to life's close. I wonder what this promise means? Well, I think it means something like this: "I am going to send you out on a mission. This mission embraces just one supreme business. I am going to make it your lifelong and only duty to preach the Gospel. You don't know just where your lot is to be cast, neither is that any of your business. You are to go into the uttermost parts of the earth, if necessary. But now you needn't be afraid and act cowardly. I know that it is a very solemn responsibility, and you are only an earthen vessel, but I am going to be with you. I am not going to let any trouble or danger befall you but that is for your good. All the time I am going to watch over you and take care of you. You can't care for yourself, so just trust yourself into



my hands and I will be with you always. And be assured my presence will assure success in your work."

I am glad that our Savior told us in His last conversation that in His spiritual presence He would be with us while engaged in His blessed work. I never lead a candidate for baptism into the River—a typical baptism—without recalling this precious promise, and it always fills my heart with joy.

Then again, there are comforting things all through the Bible for those that preach the gospel—that publish salvation. Isaiah views it in the following language: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth" Eight hundred years after this picture by Isaiah, Paul, referring to the scripture just quoted, substantially repeats the same language in Romans 10:15. Isaiah sees the messenger a long way off: As he comes upon the hill, and he fancies that his feet are beautiful, not literally of course, but as bearers of good news—as the means of conveyance. Go back to the days of mail-coaches, and we can fancy that the sound of the rolling wheels was sweet sounds to the man expecting an important message—a message that was to affect all his future career. Now, go back to the time of Isaiah. Then men ran to carry messages. You now see the meaning of the word "beautiful" as applied to the messengers of salvation.



It indicates the excellence, the preciousness of their message. This message is the gospel. The gospel of peace; glad tidings of good things. God's merciful means of subjugation. Faith in God and love for humanity will enable a man to preach this gospel acceptably. When it is preached with a clear head and clean heart it is the most powerful influence over men of anything on earth. If, brother preacher, you wish to increase and attract your congregations to you, study your sermons better and take more time for the preparation of the heart. This advice carried out will soon fill your house with an attentive audience. I believe Mr. Spurgeon uttered the truth when he said, if God calls a man to preach He will call people to hear him.

O, my brethren, do let me say some earnest things to you. You chose me at your last association to preach this introductory sermon. Why I do not know. But I have prayed earnestly to be directed both in the subject and also the presentation of it. I trust I was lead by the Holy Spirit to adopt this subject. Then do not allow my youth to make these truths less solemn. Hear me, my brother! Some years ago, by solemn services, your church, Christ's executive on earth, set you apart to a work; yes, a *work*, a great work, a heaven-appointed work. It was to be your supreme and only business. There are no sidetracks, no lay-offs; none, none! No, not one, until God says: "Enough! Come up higher!" What about it, my brother? Have you been "fishing"

since then? Have you become disheartened and fainted by the wayside? Have you been distrustful at times and felt like giving up? Have you been discouraged by some uncharitable and backbiting brother? If we get away from God, these things will shake us. We need daily to look into our own hearts, and ask ourselves the question:

“Am I a soldier of the cross,  
A follower of the Lamb;  
And shall I fear to own His cause,  
Or blush to speak his name?

“Must I be carried to the skies  
On flow’ry beds of ease,  
While others fought to win the prize,  
And sailed through bloody seas?”

Having repeated these interrogations, the lines of another poet address themselves to us with great force:

“My soul, be on thy guard,  
Ten thousand foes arise;  
The hosts of sin are pressing hard,  
To draw thee from the skies.

“Oh! watch and fight, and pray,  
The battle ne’er give o’er;  
Renew it boldly day by day,  
And help divine implore.”

A fact that must deeply pain every truly consecrated Christian is to note the manifest indifference of so many

preachers with reference to their work; and for what trivial causes they will abandon it, and enter upon various secular avocations—avocations that in no sense pertain to the evangelization of the word. Such conduct upon the part of God's servants (if servants at all) is necessarily demoralizing to all men of observation (and most men observe what preachers do.) Surely all such preachers have forgotten Paul's injunction to Timothy: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." "Approved unto what did you say, Paul?" "Approved unto God." "Approved for what, Paul?" "A workman." "Why a workman?" "That he needeth not to be ashamed." "Do you mean, Paul, that a preacher who is not a workman for God ought to be ashamed?" "Yes, I mean that he ought to be ashamed before God and man; and I mean further, that if he is a *preacher* he will be ashamed." "Well, then, Paul, do you think any preacher in Texas ought to be ashamed?" "Yes, several hundred of them." Brethren, there are two big sermons in this passage of scripture for every preacher: First, he must be industrious in preparation; and next, he must rightly divide the word of truth. If he does this, he will have all he can attend to in this brief life.

I do not wish to be harsh, brethren, for the same book from which I have been quoting says, also: "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all

men." But I do want to dig about you to-day, if, perchance, we may all return home to our work better men and better preachers. I have learned from my few years' experience that the true servant of God has much to dishearten him, but we are admonished to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," and the word soldier implies hardships.

I have thought a good many times of a remark made to me by a brother preacher who was a member of the first church I ever served and the one I represent to-day. He had moved several miles from the immediate community. I had, as I yet have, very high regard for his piety, as well as his counsel, and told him I regretted that he did not live near enough to give me the benefit of his advice and experience. He replied, in that tender way so characteristic of his good heart: "I would be very happy, my dear brother, to divide the benefit of my experience with you, but all preachers have to go through the mill and be ground up for themselves, and I expect the sooner the better."

I think it would be very profitable for every preacher and deacon at least, to read the books of Timothy at least once every week. I never read them without feeling that I am going to be a better man and try to be a better preacher. A theatrical man was once asked by an able divine why it was that he could go upon the stage and move people to tears with what he and they knew to be fiction, while he, the preacher, would preach

eternal truths to his auditors and they sit unmoved. The actor replied, "The question is simple. I preach fiction as though it were truth, while you preach truth as though it were fiction." No amount of rhetorical declamation will ever lead a sinner to the Lord Jesus Christ, but Paul says he is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

It may seem that the burden of my sermon has been directed to the preachers, but it can be explained from the sad words of our Savior's prayer in John 17:25: "O, righteous father, the world hath not known thee." We, as preachers, largely have the bread of heaven in our custody, and if the world receives it we must give it to them. God has taken us out of the world to herald this news through the earth; to publish the gospel notes of salvation, and to cry out, "Our God reigneth." He has chosen earthen vessels to magnify His power over the hearts of men, but he has promised to equip us for the work, and with this assurance we should not fear to stand anywhere, at any time, but with a faith unshaken or unshakable, rejoice to preach the message given unto us by inspired prophets and apostles.

When this is done, what a harvest of light will follow! "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." Then, oh then, shall millennium glory flood the earth! "He shall see of the travail His

soul, and shall be satisfied." Then shall the weeping sower come rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. Then shall many of His faithful servants look into His smiling face and hear the blessed applause: "Well done, good and faithful servant!" Then shall be fulfilled the promise, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." We shall see the iron staff that has borne his truceless banner of death, broken, and as it falls and sinks lower and lower, we shall read, written in letters of fire: "Woe, woe, woe!" while, as the silver cord is loosed, that bears the banner of the Son of glory, the Prince of Peace, we shall read in words of gold: "Glory, glory, glory!"

## A NOBLE BOY.

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Every parent that brings a noble boy into the world bestows a blessing upon humanity. But it must be remembered that after nature has done her best in endowing the natural qualities of the soul with the best and highest attributes, that much, yes, all is left for parentage to develop. The noblest endowments may either be deadened or turned into channels that will work their ultimate wreck. Eternity alone can reveal the criminality arising from the neglect of parents along this line. 'Tis true that it would be very difficult to make a fine piece of statuary out of a sorry piece of marble, but it is also true that a very fine quality of marble may be so chiseled and disproportioned as to produce a statue of very mean proportions.

An artist once looked at a very fine, though very rough piece of marble, and exclaimed to a friend: "I see an angel in that marble." Many a chip was first to be taken off and much skilled labor to be performed before he could prove his statement to be true, but as certainly as the artist could develop the rough bulk of marble into an attractive monument, so can the thoughtful, painstaking parent develop into a monument—not of cold,

pulseless statuary—but of honor and benevolence, the boy that nature has placed at their disposal.

One misdirected lick with the sculptor's chisel can so deface the beauty of his marble that it is a worthless bulk. And so, one unguarded word or thoughtless act of the parent may so mar the beauty of the soul of his boy that his life will be full of human weakness and sin. The sculptor does his work on the outside of his marble, while the parent's chips fly from the heart of his son. The sculptor's work must perish with the wear of time, the parent's can never. The work wrought on human hearts and destinies is imperishable work. Time can never deface its traces. If such is the result of influence, how grand the possibilities that lie within the power of those whom God has given an offspring to mold and polish for this life and the life to come; and how important that we live for something every hour of our existence, something that is worthy of our present dignity and harmonious with the grandeur of our future.

One of the first essentials to a noble boy, is earnestness of purpose, and without this characteristic all other qualities amount to but little. The giddy, flippant maneuvers of many boys who fancy themselves to be "catching," is only disgusting to all sensible people. Do and say what you do in a plain, frank manner. There are plenty of parrots and monkeys in the world, and we can well afford to let them do all the mimicing necessary for the well being of the world. Sobriety and



plainness are indicative of good sense, and all sensible people so understand it. This life is composed of *real*, and not imaginary things, and a noble boy is something *real*. He is earnest in what he says and does, and is actuated by motives rather than circumstances and surroundings.

A noble boy tells the truth at all times, under all circumstances. To him deception is lying. Deceit and falsehood are twin sisters, and he will no more indulge in one than the other. His word is as his oath, and his acquaintances never distrust either. He has so accustomed himself to telling the truth that his manner of telling anything carries conviction even to the stranger's heart. Like the face of a reliable clock, his story is seldom questioned. With his high regard for the truth he is slow to embrace error. With Lock he believes: "To be indifferent whether we embrace falsehood or truth is the great road to error." And with Goldsmith he has learned: "Every absurdity hath a champion to defend it, for error is always talkative."

Among other qualities of the mind and heart that go in to make up the ideal of our subject, is *politeness*. He has traveled but a short distance and observed less, that has never witnessed the broad difference between the polite and impolite boy. Politeness is a quality of the heart, and is very different from mere good manners. Manners differ in every country, but politeness is the same the world over. Without any knowledge of the

routine of etiquette, a boy possessed of a good heart knows at all times the demands of politeness, and unconsciously responds to her demands. He acts from the highest and noblest ideas of what is right. "It is," says Witherspoon, "real kindness kindly expressed." It is the accompaniment of thoughtfulness, and always considers age, social standing and disability. A polite boy gallops up or waits to open the gate for the aged; carries the burden for the small boy; and has a word of kindness for the poor. He respects the individuality of others, as he wishes others to respect him. In church and society he never smirks and "puts on airs," as though he were wiser and better than others. He listens respectfully and attentively to other men, and if forced from conviction to differ, he acknowledges his fallibility. A noble and every-day thoughtfulness of others comes of goodness, of sincerity, and of refinement. It is the last touch, the crowning perfection of a noble character, practiced daily by the warm soul of a generous boy.

His consideration of others prompts him also to be neat in his personal appearance. He is as careful at his mother's table as at a neighbor's, to have his hair neatly combed and his clothes properly adjusted.

He is modest, and often bashful. Good sense is always distrustful of itself, and bashfulness is no bad omen for a boy. Cato has well said: "It is better for a young man to blush than to turn pale." Brazenness

indicates conceit, and conceit indicates a want of good sense.

These things make an ideal boy—a noble character; and “A thing of beauty is a joy forever.”

LOOK ON THE SUNNY SIDE.

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Life is largely what we make it. Every individual is largely the architect of his own fortune, and more than half of the ills of life are more imaginary than real. A good per cent. of them can be attributed to a bad state of digestion, and a great many others are attributable to a law of psychology, viz: The tendency of the mind to follow in often-traveled paths. It is quite possible for one to practice an error or repeat a falsehood until he will really believe it.

We are short-sighted creatures. When it is snowing, it looks to us as though it would snow all winter. And when some misfortune overtakes us, we feel that we can never pass over it. We forget that misfortunes are the refiner's fire to consume the dross, and that "Everything works together for good to them that love the Lord." We imagine that our heartaches are more painful than others, forgetting that we all breathe the same air, and that each heart has its sorrows. Could we walk around our neighbor's heart, we would very likely be more contented to live at home. "Every bitter has its sweet, and every sweet its bitter," but we need not to make it more bitter than it is.

We are going to find in this world just about what we

look for. To the distrustful everybody is a rascal, and to the thief everybody is an officer. We prefer the almanacs that predict the severest storms and longest droughts. The neighbor that always has a good stock of fresh woes of the neighborhood is a welcome visitor to many homes at least. Many of us would find it money well spent to settle up all arrears like this, and take stock in another company, and do business over different roads. The trains that are not so heavily loaded make better schedule any way, and will bring our goods to us before they spoil.

It is right for us to have our sorrows. They make the heart better, and enable us to more fully sympathize with others. Grief is a common bond that unites hearts. It can unite hearts more closely than happiness. Many herbs have first to be bruised before they give forth their sweetest odors; so hearts need to be crushed before they give forth the excellence in them.

But God does not want his people to spend their lives in shadowy foreboding. He has beautified the earth with sunshine, music and flowers; and then hung the rainbow in the heavens as a pledge of his love and protection. The lily among the briars and the stars by night bid us look up and be happy. Hope points to the hills of everlasting sunshine and bids us be merry while crossing the turbulent stream of time.

It never has been since man was driven from Eden's bowers, that he has realized all that his heart has desired.

There was a link snapped that has never been welded since. Not until, "I awake in thy likeness" will he ever be satisfied again. The king upon his throne with his millions of subjects, and the millionaire with his vaults of gold, lack that which neither influence nor money can secure. But there is enough realization and enough of the true to make us happy and contented. To complain that life has no joys, while there is a single creature that we can relieve by our bounty, assist by counsel, or enliven by our presence, is to lament that which we have in our possession. It were as absurd as to die of thirst with a glass of water in our hand. The great and lamented, Dr. Broadus, once said that the main source of happiness consisted of plenty to do and strength to do it. We all have plenty to do—the world is at our disposal—and we have sufficient strength to do enough to make us happy and contented. The law of God and nature is one of ceaseless activity, and plenty of work in the right place will make us contented to live out our days on earth.

Let us, dear friend, when the melancholy hours steal upon us, place our hand upon our bosom and repeat the lines of another:

"Be still, sad heart, and cease repining,  
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;  
Thy fate is the common fate of all;  
Into each life some rain must fall;  
Some days must be dark and dreary."

The things that seem to be working our ruin are often angels of mercy in disguise. Our worst and bitterest disappointments are often our best friends. He who places his life into the hands of One that is wise, able and good, may safely expect a safe and prosperous voyage across this transient life and anchorage at last in the port of eternal bliss. Let us then,

“Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,  
But trust Him for His grace ;  
Behind a frowning providence,  
He hides a smiling face.”

## “DO THYSELF NO HARM.”

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In the heading of this chapter *you*, understood, is the subject. At the first thought there might seem to be a great absurdity, that however careless or criminal we are towards others, we will be certain to do nothing to harm ourselves. But a more thoughtful consideration of the subject will evince the sad truth that we are constantly doing great injustice to ourselves. It is not necessary that we have the jailer's sword in our hand in order to pierce our heart and sap life of its blood. But comparatively few people commit suicide instantly, but a very large per cent. of them do this in the course of a short life. And in the great aggregate of life one is as disastrous and wicked as the other.

Others may harm us for a short time by slanderous reports and false statements, but these will prove to be false, and at last will turn their poisonous points towards the one that strung the bow. But this is not so with reference to ourselves. The criminalities that we do ourselves increase more and more to our ruin. If we do right ourselves heaven and good men will not harm us, and hell and wicked men can't. To have God and good men on our side, means to triumph over the



devil and bad men, but to have God and good men against us, means success to our enemies and death to us.

“To thine own self be true;  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

If we say that this life is the only theatre of human conduct and influence, then we should shudder at the thought of passing through the scope of our allotment without making the best possible use of our talents and opportunities. To live but once and then at but poor account, must be below the true destiny of man. But since, according to almost universal consent, this life is only a transient school of preparation for a stage of grander possibilities and eternal consequences, it becomes of wonderful importance that every thought and action of our life be such as to fit us for the highest enjoyment of the life to come. If this life is but a dressing-room, where we clothe ourself to enter the company of God and angels, we should mark with care everything pertaining thereto. Many inelegancies that would be overlooked by man, will not pass the scrutiny of God and the angelic hosts.

Aside from revelation, we cannot but believe that the possibility of a phenomenal destiny is within the reach of all. Intuition points to happier homes, fairer fields and higher attainments than this life has ever produced; and we could only conclude that such inspirations are

only sparks of divinity to keep us in constant unrest and dissatisfaction if there was no sphere where these are felt and possessed. These intuitions spring from faculties that correspond to objective realities, and this earthly home foreshadows our eternal home.

In view, then, of an eternal and unchangeable habitation beyond the pale of stars, our exhortation rings with a peculiar significance. "Do thyself no harm."

There is no equipoise, as some suppose, between right and wrong, between that which will elevate and ennoble and that which degrades and corrupts. The balances will turn one way or the other. Philosophy has traced the wave of a pebble across the broad sea. No matter how seemingly insignificant the thought or action, it has a tendency, and either lifts up or pulls down.

" 'Tis education forms the common mind;

Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined."

All around us we see men of sound minds and good health who only help to fill space and crowd the world. They seem to be struggling in certain directions, but they have not guarded the "little foxes" of their lives; they have not held themselves in sacred reserve from everything against the highest possible success of mankind, and hence, enough dross has entered into their lives to shut the door to success. They awake in time

only to realize their folly, but, like a ship going over the rapids, too late to retreat.

“There is a tide in the affairs of men,  
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune,  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life  
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.”

Let every young man, when tempted to do a wrong thing or say a wicked word, stop and listen for a moment to the ringing words of inspiration, “Do thyself no harm.” God would have you do nothing to rob you of the noble attributes of a man, and speaks out in warning tones through the voice of his inspired teacher. “The way of the transgressor is hard,” and the traces of sins committed are read on the face of many a young man who imagines his sins are concealed in his own heart, and who would blush to be found in virtuous company did he know that his vice was written in his face and read by many of his associates.

The face is the expression of the fountain of life, but if that fountain be turned through marshy swamps and malarial regions, so will this mirror of the soul change with the turn of the tide. Physiognomy is a faithful calendar, and writes its accounts in tables of flesh. The twitching of a muscle or the languor of a cheek tells the full story of the past history.

Out of the heart are the issues of life, and the young man who does not shudder at the expression of profan-

ity is on the highway to ruin. No young man can develop into a high type of true nobility who thus defiles his soul. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God in vain," was uttered in the voice of thunder at the terrible phenomena of Sinai, and the awful penalty affixed was, "for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." The young man guilty of misdemeanors before heaven will never pluck many stars from her sparkling crown. He can only feel the sting of what he has lost, and join the wailing acclaim:

"Of all sad words of tongue or pen,  
The saddest are these, 'it might have been.' "

If, my young friend, your life is given to profanity, harsh words, or unthoughtfulness of others, you have a millstone around your neck that will ever keep you close to the earth. There is a social fabric running through society that you are under obligations to observe, and these things are offensive thereto. Not a few young men, when it came their time to ask a favorable consideration of their friends, have felt the defeat of failure upon their part to perform these things early in life.

"Who will not to others mercy show,  
How can he ever mercy hope to have?"

The field wherein one may harm themselves is as broad as human conduct, and no set of rules can cover all the ground. The fullest and clearest definition that

can be given is, *anything* antagonistic to God. He alone is the author of good, and the deeds of our life commended by Him must ever live while He lives, while those opposed to His law must perish very soon. Moreover, the doing of those things which are honorable and good receive the approbation of conscience, and this is a mighty incentive to help us on in the battle of life.

Remember, young man, you hold the rope that turns the rudder by which your ship sails out to sea. If she returns freighted with a valuable cargo, your steering must be clear of lagoons and shoals. You must keep in hearing of the fog horns and in sight of the light houses.

This chapter has been written with the hope of helping every young man who reads it. Doubtless some will feel its force from a regretted experience, and others will take timely warning and save themselves from the terrible consequences of bad habits. We ask no other reward. And now, as we began, we end, “Do thyself no harm.”

## SOLEMN "IFS."

If you say in your heart, there is no God, will not time prove you to be a fool?

If you live and act as though you would live forever, may you not live forever away from God?

If you should know this to be your last day on earth, would you spend it as you intend?

If you really believed everything in the Bible, would you act toward it as you have?

If you realized the certainty of a judgment bar, would you live as you do?

If Christ condemns you in the judgment, what will you have to say?

If you continue to reject Christ as your Savior, where will you spend eternity?

If you should die to-night, what would become of you?

If you knowingly disobey God every day that He is sparing your life to repent, will not His anger against you be great?

If you make your bed in hell, who will you blame?

If you refuse to seek Christ to-day, may you not be in hell to-morrow?

If you go to hell, will you ever get out?

If you reject Christ in this life, what will he do with you in the life to come?

If Christ does not plead your cause in the judgment, who will?

If you were in hell and God were to send His Son to let you out, would you delay in leaving?

If your sins follow you to the judgment, will they not follow you away from it?

If you fail to have on the "Wedding garment," can you claim that it was not prepared for you?

If you go to hell, will you carry any one with you?

If you say there is no hell, may you not have opportunity to change your mind?

If you lose your soul, what will you receive in exchange?

If you miss the company of the redeemed, whose company will you keep?

If money is your god, will heaven ever be your home?

If you care nothing for God, would not heaven be an unpleasant place for you?

If you continue to live as you have, will the world be any worse off when you are gone?

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”—*Gal. 6:7*.



## A MONTH FROM MY DIARY

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NOTE OF EXPLANATION.—The circumstances with which we are surrounded have much to do with our thoughts and feelings, and it may be of some interest to the reader to state that the following thoughts were written in 1889, while living in Seattle, Washington, as salesman in the employ of a grocer merchant.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1, 1889.—To-day a new year breaks forth to remind us that time is swiftly bearing us on its bosom to life's close. So, likewise, I earnestly desire to begin with renewed zeal in the holy service of God, and sincerely hope this will be my best year, thus far. Trusting now in God to lead me I shall begin.

JANUARY 2.—I am persuaded that, "it is more blessed to give than to receive." "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

JANUARY 3.—Although I let the days go by unheeded, and look to the near future when I will redeem them as they come and go, yet God counts them all, and when I am at last received into His blessed abode, I believe these misspent days and hours will appear before me like mountains stripped by winter's blast, and, perhaps, I may know of some dear friend that I could have led to Christ, but sat still while some one else led them to

hell. Great God forbid! "Truly the field is white unto harvest, but the laborers are few."

JANUARY 4.—I wonder, when my days are ended, and I feel my pulse are growing weak, if I will bemoan mis-spent days, or rejoice over a bountiful victory in the service of God? I pray for the latter.

"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve, God or mammon."

JANUARY, 5.—Last night I had a dream that has changed my life and led me to think of life in its sterner sense. I also had a very strange dream of mother. When I awoke I was both glad and sad.

HOLY SABBATH, JANUARY 6.—Through poverty and care, being yoked to another man's will, I have profaned the Sabbath by working all day, taking stock. God grant that the time may soon come when I will depend on no one but Thee, and I'll strive to regain this day which is worse than lost.

"Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work, and on the seventh thou shalt rest."

JANUARY 7.—The fact that I like to see the day speed away is proof that life is not worth living only to those who are awaiting the overflowing of their cup beyond this vale of tears. If all were to speak the truth in their departing hour, all that had lived and died without

Christ would tell us that life was ultimately a failure, and death a terror.

“He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption.”

JANUARY 8.—My life may not be what I would choose, but it will be just what I make it. So I commence to-day to build myself as I wish to be.

“Behold, to-day is the day of salvation; to-day is the accepted time!”

JANUARY 9.—Next to the rich love that flows from the throne of God, I esteem true friendship. I had rather have friends than riches. I recall one friend to-night for which I would not accept the treasures of Egypt.

May it be mine to have a rich income of such friends each year of my life. “Behold how good and how pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity.”

JANUARY 10.—Often I walk the crowded streets with thousands who could make me happy and drive the loneliness from my soul, when they only make me more lonely, and make me feel that it would be sweet to retreat from the crowd to the quiet of the forest and seek rest and communion under the tossing firs.

JANUARY 11.—In my heart there is a pang, caused from the words of an angry man; in my heart there is yet room for joy and happiness, should some one else

speaking a word of sympathy and encouragement. Oh, why was the former chosen!

JANUARY 12.—12 o'clock p. m.—Rest is always sweetest after a hard day's work, and in heaven those who have worked shall sweetly rest. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13.—This is a beautiful Sabbath day. It seems thus far it was ordered for me, and I have prayed God's guidance upon the intentions of the day. Having lead me thus far, lead me on, O God!

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart,  
And He shall direct thy paths."

JANUARY 14.—"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Glorious reality! Take the world and give me God and heaven.

JANUARY 15.—My greatest desire of life is, knowledge. Peace, good will and charity.

JANUARY 16.—I know of nothing more uncherished than a reproving spirit. Often I have had such to deal with.

JANUARY 17.—I am one day nearer heaven and home to-day; while there are others one day nearer hell's despairing grasp. The gospel is the savor of life unto life, or death unto death.

I count that day and hour lost in which I've done no good.

JANUARY 18.—There is nothing that troubles me as much as to see how fast this generation is forgetting God, and how extremely unconcerned many of God's own children are becoming. God grant that each year of my life may be devoted to Thy cause.

“As in the days of Noah, so shall also be the coming of the son of man.”

JANUARY 19.—One hath bought fun (if it may be called fun) at another's expense to-night.

JANUARY 20.—“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

JANUARY 21.—I now behold a setting sun. The day is soon to be numbered with the past! Past, but not *forgotten!* To-day God's name has been profaned; His righteous law broken! To-day hell's terrible hand has been strengthened—her end brought nearer! Oh! who will be able to stand?

JANUARY 22.—Good morning, fair friend; thou art a stranger, yet thy face looks familiar. Thou seemeth to be from God, having in thy bosom the presence of the ever-to-be-adored God. Cometh thou hither with scales in thy hands to weigh us? God help us to weigh ourselves, and thus be heavy in thy scales.

JANUARY 23.—Thou art present with us, even as the living God is present; and thou hath in thy every

shadow the presence and image of God. So, likewise, may thy each successor be to me even more God-like until my last months may be softened, peaceful, and fully conformed to the will of God, my Creator.

JANUARY 24.—May my last days be full of the glow of a glorious sunset which shall but dip behind the horizon of this life, to rise in resplendence and glory upon the beautiful banks of deliverance in the life to come.

JANUARY 25.—Thou, like earth's vanities, shall soon pass away and be forgotten by man, but likewise God counts you both. Thou shalt see thyself again bye-and-bye.

JANUARY 26.—Another week is gone; gone for aye; its race is over! I stop to see what I have done. The evil is revealed like the present day, but the good, like the past, I see not. Let a tear be dropped, and may God be merciful!

JANUARY 27.—Blessed Sabbath, I press thee to my hungry soul! Blessed day for earth's pilgrim, affording him opportunity to return to the house of God and drink of the "water of life." May thy Giver prepare me to appropriate thy blessings.

JANUARY 28.—When I pick up my pen to write, I always write the thoughts that come to me unpremeditated, and when no other thoughts come to me, it is

sweet to recall some passage of Scripture that answers my feelings, and this, I believe, is given me from God.

JANUARY 29.—“God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.”

JANUARY 30.—Traveler, good morning!

JANUARY 31.—Good bye, old friend, farewell! A few more brief hours, and thy work is finished. Roll on and reveal thyself again in eternity, and then we will know thee better than whilst thou wast with us, and possibly appreciate thee more.

## A WORD WITH THE AGED.

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In the preceding chapters we have aimed principally to try to benefit the young in our advice. We realize that upon the present youth will soon rest the responsibilities of home and state, and besides this, they are yet largely to be moulded in character; while the aged make but few changes, morally or otherwise.

If we have failed to benefit any of our many young friends, then we must admit that we have written in vain. But while our heart feels the keenest sympathy for the youth and the deepest possible interest in their welfare, both in this life and the life to be, yet there is a warm place in our bosom for the advanced in life, for those who are bowed beneath the weight of many years, and who feel that their days on earth are few.

Great is the wisdom needed for the one who assumes to write for those who make but few changes in life, and who make none but from the gravest reasons. But as we enter the homes of the aged, and presume to counsel their sons, and there see some things that ought not to be in their fathers and mothers, shall we say, "Hands off;" "they are beyond hope?" Such we can not believe to be inevitably so. It is true that hoary time stands with his sword unsheathed and cries: "What thou



doest, do quickly," but this only intensifies the desire to lend a helping hand.

To those who have passed into that mysterious bourne, we can bring no message of love; but to those soon to go hence we have a loving heart propelling us to say some thoughtful things, to say some things worthy of age, and that may awaken the best emotions of the tired and sick heart.

There is a time in our lives when it may be profitable to look back upon our past, that we may correct the present, but we do not ask this of our aged friend. The time is too short, and the future too near. We ask a sober, thoughtful, serious consideration of the future. Concerning this life, time has verified the preacher's declaration, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit;" but there is a realm where the sun never sets; where the rainbow never fades; and where the stars spread out before us like the islands that slumber amid the ocean. The anchorage at this port swells into heavenly anthems, every discordant note produced by the hand of the despoiler, and floods the soul with eternal sunshine. It is the fulfillment of every rapture felt by a curbed aspiration; yea, more! "It has not entered into the heart of man the good things that are in store for those that love the Lord." It is the overflowing of a newly opened fountain of the soul. Such is the passage, revered sir, to be made in the swift transit from the temple of ruins to the glorious abode of the temples of God.

There is another picture we do not wish to paint; another passage around which we prefer to draw the curtain of night, and let no sound escape. This path is lined with the slime and venom of asps. All kinds of hissing sounds frighten the bewildered traveler, and the road leads forever downward until a darkness seizes the lonely wanderer, that closes every avenue of light to the chambers of the soul. This road, we do not want any reader to travel, so we refrain from description.

Truly, the possibilities of the living are phenomenal. Standing amid the living and choosing between the dead, the possibilities are as high as heaven, and the probabilities as deep as hell. While occupying this neutral ground, biddings are being made to him for the *wreck* of this world. God stands before him and says, as Creator He will accept the ruin if freely offered, and with the magic of His recreating power, transforms it out of every pain, sin and weakness until it is fashioned like unto His glorious body, and then take it into His kingdom to reign with the redeemed forever more. The devil stands on the other side and offers pleasure, lust, indulgence, and at last the utter dethronement of every virtue of the soul, until hell will be the only suited dwelling place in the universe. Heaven feeling the insult against her offer, cries out to the man, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve!"

The power and pleasure of such choice places man above the angels that vie around the throne of God.

But before he can reach either of these stages of final consequences, he must pass through a process, which, for want of a better name, we will call *death*.

“Death’s but a path that must be trod,  
If man would ever pass to God.”

“It is assigned unto man once to die.” The great catalogue, including the king and the peasant, the rich and the poor, the hero and the coward, the learned and the unlearned, closes with the final findings: “And he died.” No matter how illustrious his life has been, nor how grand the splendor that has surrounded certain events, the march to the grave has moved on with unbroken succession.

“The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth e’er gave,  
Await alike the inevitable hour;  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.”

The last word on every marble slab may appropriately be, *finis*. In the program of every life is written somewhere, “final scene.”

“Our lives are rivers, gliding free  
To that unfathomed, boundless sea,  
The silent grave!”

No matter how bright has been the rainbow of youth’s promise, no matter how pleasant and serene life’s course has been, the end of this life shall be full of bitter fare-

wells, sobs and tears! No matter how hard the heart, nor how long-sealed the fountain of tears, they will flow freely now!

“Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow.”

Provision has been made to take away the sting of death, but not to evade it. Singly and alone, each one must press the bitter cup to his lips, and drink the last dreg. As the curtain of night is drawn over the organ of vision, he must step out into the great Jordan alone. As he takes the last farewell of loved ones, he must become a lonely wanderer while passing from the living to the dead. But if his anchorage is on the “Ship of Zion,” there is a star of hope that lights up the passage and points to the hills of everlasting sunshine. There is a “peace, be still!” that calms the turbulent waves and glides the ship gently into the harbor of rest.

A loving consideration for those soon to know these things from a solemn experience, prompts us to inquire about it. If there ever was a time in our life when we could be justifiable in lightly pressing a question of such magnitude, it certainly is not now. Bowed down beneath the weight of a half century, our reader is soon to forever have settled this question. Soon, ah! very soon! it is not to be a matter of choice, but of fate. Then, as we look into thy friendly face, no, as we prostrate ourselves even at thy feet, we ask: what about it, kind sir? Listen! Is the way clear? “Are the signals all right?”

Listen! "The wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps." O, sir! is it midnight? Is all nature now reposing upon the bosom of God, and is there a solemn stillness all around us? Do you hear no sound but the throbbing of your own manly heart, and perhaps the calls of the passing whippoorwill? Place, then, your hand across your breast, and tell me, are you ready? If the death angel should visit thy cottage to-night, can you joyfully take his hand and say: "All is well?" Can you hold the hand of your loved ones and say: "Meet me in heaven?" You could not invite them to meet you elsewhere. If heaven is not your heritage, your parting hour must be one of farewells! "Good-bye forever more!" for you could not wish to meet them in hell.

And now that you have read, are you prepared to face the question and abide the results. Is it not a burning question? Is it not a living question? Is it not an eternal question? Do you push it aside because it brings serious reflections and bitter regrets? Oh, memory, burn the brain! O, conscience, awaken the slumbering soul!

It can not be that earth is the only sphere where man exists in conscious reality. It cannot be that our life is a mere bubble cast upon the great ocean of time, to float for a spell and then to burst and sink into an eternal nothingness!

When we contemplate the world as it is, there mani-

fects in our soul the wish, the longing—no! the absolute demand—for a better world. When we take a glance at the relations of men to each other, at the weakness of their powers, and the strength of their appetites and passions, it at once begets in our heart the unsatisfying desire and longing for a place where these are not. “Thus,” in the language of Fichte, “it cannot possibly be destined always to remain. It must, oh! it must all become other and better.”

We can in no wise imagine this our final condition, our final and whole destination; if so, then would everything be dream and delusion, and it would not be worth the trouble to have lived and taken part in the ever recurring, unproductive and unmeaning game. Only as we regard this condition as the means of something better, as a point of transition to a higher and more perfect life, does it acquire any value to us. Not on its own account, but on account of something better for which it prepares the way, can we honor it, bear it, and joyfully fulfill our part in it. The truly righteous mind and sensitive heart can find no rest, nor place in this present life; it is irresistibly repelled by it. Such a life streams on irrepressibly towards the future and better.

“Shall man live beyond the grave?” was the involuntary question of horror-stricken humanity as they lowered the first corpse beneath the sod. It was no idle, speculative interrogation of curiosity, but was asked beneath the stars from a bruised and bleeding heart.

"If a man die, will he live again?" is a question older than Job and newer than the latest grave. As death invades each home, the weeping loved ones intuitively ask the question, "If a man die will he live again?" "Beyond the stars does my departed one live, and shall I meet him there?"

Science has grappled with the question in vain. Above the proudest flights of reason, above the sweep of tube and lens, beyond the language of the spectro-scope, where human eye has never rested, lies the mysterious realm through the silent gate of death. Men, basing upon intuition, or relying upon some philosophical deduction, may conclude that the dead live again, but it is only through faith in Him who came to bring life and immortality to light that we can satisfactorily say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and again, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." Reason staggers at so stupendous a question, while faith lays hold of it and applies it to every sorrow of life.

The life, then, that is described by the stars, plainly foretold by revelation, and longed for by the panting heart, must be the life designed by the Great Father for His creatures. Such a life only, corresponds to intuition. To fall short of this is to fall below the uprisings of the heart. To miss it, is to fail to get any response from nature for desires ungratified.

On the other hand, the fulfillment of it is the welding of every broken link, the restoration of every severed tie, and the finding of the fountain of every sacred joy. It is precisely the response of the altar-fires of the aged, bowed beneath the disappointments of a short life. Here the scattered and broken family are united. Here the rusty chain is polished never to corrode again, and here the star of hope never sets.

Such a life, my friend, is at your deliberate disposal to-day. Embrace it, and the wealth of every age is thine. Like the rainbow of promise, thy raptures are unbroken and eternal. To lose it, is to lose all! To die without is to die forevermore! Love prompts us to insist on decision, if you have not already made it.

And now, shall it be that we have written in vain? Shall it be that we have said nothing to help the thoughtful and aged? We prayed that we might. Will no one sitting under the evening shadows of life thank us for our trouble? Oh, shall it, shall it be, that any one who reads this chapter shall soon walk through the valley and shadow of death alone, and at last have the gate of mercy closed upon his tempest-tossed soul?

I asked an aged man, a man of cares,  
Wrinkled and curved, and white with hoary hairs.  
"Time is the warp of life," he said; "O, tell  
The young, the fair, the gay to weave it well!"

I asked the aged venerable dead,  
Sages who wrote, and warriors who bled.



From the cold grave a hollow murmur flow'd:  
"Time sowed the seed we reap in this abode."

I asked a dying sinner, ere the tide  
Of life had left his veins. "Time," he replied,  
"I've lost it! Ah, the treasure!" and he died.

I asked the golden sun and silver spheres,  
Those bright chronometers of days and years.  
They answered, "Time is but a meteor glare,  
And bids us for eternity prepare."

I asked the seasons in their annual round,  
Which beautify and desolate the ground.  
And they replied (no oracle more wise),  
"'Tis folly's loss, and virtue's highest prize."

I asked a spirit lost; but oh! the shriek  
That pierced my soul! I shudder while I speak.  
It cried: "A particle, a speck, a mite  
Of endless years, duration infinite!"

Of things inanimate my dial I  
Consulted, and it made me this reply:  
"Time is the season fair of living well,  
The path of glory, or the path to hell."

I ask'd my Bible, and methinks it said:  
"Time is the present hour, the past is fled;  
Live! live to-day! To-morrow never yet  
On any human being rose or set."

## THE WIDOWER.

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A POEM IN THREE PARTS.

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BY GRANDFATHER JACKSON.

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[The poem below was written fifty-six years ago by Grandfather Jackson—my mother's father—on the death of grandmother and two of his sons. The original copy was written with a goose quill, and is kept by the family as a memento.]

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### PART I.

And is my Lucinda dead,  
And has her sainted spirit fled?  
Am I alone to tread this thorny maze?  
Oh, can it, can it be,  
That I no more shall see,  
Shall hear no more thy voice,  
My love, my life, my choice?

Oh can it, can it be,  
That both my sons and she,  
In a few moons, have left  
A husband—father—so bereft?  
Why should I here remain  
Bereft of all but pain?  
Are not all comforts fled;  
All, all forever dead?

A solitude is all to me;  
Naught is left, but woes to thee,  
My home, my walks, my chair.  
Solitary all e'en my prayer.  
Why, O, why remain  
Bereft of all but pain.  
\*As one day op'd the womb,  
Why, O why not clos'd the tomb.

## PART II.

And now 'tis midnight deep  
While all the happy sleep  
Shades of my loves appear  
A moment dry my flowing tear.  
A voice as from heaven I hear,  
Cherubic forms in light appear  
In flowing robes divinely bright;  
'Tis noontide blaze in depth of night.

Hark, my soul,  
Oh hear them sing  
Glory be to God on high;  
Hymn His praises o'er the sky.  
Golden harps, tune all your lays  
To the mighty saviour praise,  
All our tears are wiped away;  
Celestial joys—eternal day—  
Free, free from every woe,  
Life and love forever flow.

Glory be to God on high!  
Hymn His praises o'er the sky.

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\* Born same day of the year—January 1.

To the mighty Saviour raise  
Shouts of joyous, ceaseless praise.

### PART III.

Reflect, my soul! O see  
Thy sons and companion free  
From every pang—every woe  
Rivers of life around them flow.

And wouldst thou have them dust again,  
Scorched in fever—racked with pain—  
See their tears and feel their woe?  
Oh, no! no! no!

Courage, my soul; arise;  
Run for the glorious prize.  
Death will be thy release—  
Lucinda—children—peace.

## THE LAST CHAPTER.

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We are about to send forth our little booklet on its mission—if it has one. It goes forth with our most ardent wishes that wherever it goes it may bear some timely words to each friendly reader, and may really gather up some fruit for our Heavenly Father's kingdom, to whom we now dedicate it. Unless it meets His approval and has the attendance of His blessing, we have labored in vain. Though it be but a fragment of our life, yet it is a part, and the stern words of Pilate confront us with much solemnity: "What I have written, I have written."

Conscience raps at the door of our heart and asks have we accomplished any good during the hours given to the writing of these chapters? Have we written anything calculated to harm rather than help? We devoutly trust not, but our fingers tremble as we approach a conclusion, and we now submit for your consideration the thoughts now burning our own brain.

"The last chapter!" What does it mean? Last, last, last! The last act! The last word! The last thought! The last heart throb! The last opportunity! The last look! The capping stone to the building! The

finishing up—the conclusion! The effect—result! The terminus of the road. Ah, me! How strangely solemn! What awe floods the mind, and what accounts to be settled! Come now, revengeful world, and present thy claims. Come now, offended heaven, and speak thy grievances. Speak to my soul and let gall flow through my veins. Let midnight darkness seize my troubled spirit until the uttermost farthing is paid and the account is balanced.

When, my friend, you were born into the world was an occasion of joy; when you achieved some degree of eminence was an occasion of honor; when, perhaps, your name went into history to be handed down to posterity, pride rose on tip-toes; but the most momentous hour of your life is the last hour. Not when you were born, for then life was before you; not when you had achieved some brilliant success, for only the world could praise you; but when you come to take your departure, for then eternity is before you, and only that is well that ends well. 'Tis not how you begin; nor how you proceed; but how you end, that makes the great concern.

“We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;

In feelings, not in fingers on a dial.”

“We should count time by heart throbs.

He most lives, who thinks most,

Feels the noblest, acts the best.”

It is when we come to settle up that we become ac-

quainted with the grand total of our deficits, but as certain as our creditor holds the note, the settlement will be required and the pay day will come.

So we close with an exhortation to look ahead. Drive your stakes in a straight row; keep in mind the end. Remember,

“ 'Tis not all of life to live,  
Nor all of death to die.”

And at last, may a peaceful journey and a glowing sunset be yours.

“Farewell, and if forever, still forever,  
Fare thee well!”











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